

THE LIFE OF AZ-ZUHRĪ AND HIS SCHOLARSHIP
IN
QUR'ĀNIC SCIENCES AND TRADITION (ḤADĪTH AND SUNNA)

BY

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ABSTRACT

Az-Zuhrī Muḥammad b. Muslim b. 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Shihāb (52-124 A.H.) was the most learned scholar of the Umayyad period and one of the most distinguished scholars of Islam in Qur'ānic sciences ('Ulūm al-Qur'ān), Tradition (ḥadīth and sunna), jurisprudence (fiqh), the life history of the Prophet (sīra and maghāzī) and genealogy (ansāb). In spite of the fame which he achieved and the contribution which he made in respect of the religious sciences, and in spite of the deep influence which he exerted in this field, no attempt has been made so far to study his life and work - a gap which the present thesis seeks to fill.

As the title suggests, the aim of the present work is to study his life and scholarship in Qur'ānic sciences and Tradition (ḥadīth and sunna), the most significant of all the religious sciences in which he distinguished himself.

The thesis is divided into two parts.

The first part, which is devoted to the study of az-Zuhrī's life, consists of two chapters. Chapter I deals with the clan and family of az-Zuhrī, his childhood and his educational attainments in Mecca and Medina.

Chapter II speaks about his relationship with the Umayyad caliphs, the influence he exerted upon them, the positions he held under them, his intellectual status, and the lively interest which he displayed in disseminating the religious sciences.

The second part, which is devoted to the study of az-Zuhrī's scholarship in Qur'ānic sciences and Tradition (ḥadīth and sunna), also consists of two chapters. In chapter III an attempt is made to examine the most significant viewpoints of az-Zuhrī in respect of the Qur'ānic readings, to indicate the reading which he has selected from the seven original Qur'ānic readings, his method in Qur'ānic exegesis, and to analyse his works, Tanzīl al-Qur'ān and Mansūkh al-Qur'ān, which remain in manuscript form. Chapter IV deals with his eagerness and enthusiasm in teaching and criticism, codification and compilation of Tradition; his methods in the transmission of Traditions and his sources.

This study is based on materials derived from unique manuscripts and other primary sources, and seeks to bring to light significant features in az-Zuhrī's life and scholarship in the Qur'ānic sciences and in Tradition (ḥadīth and sunna). It also brings out some important facts in the history of the Qur'ānic sciences and Tradition during the Umayyad period.

ABBREVIATIONS

- A. Dā'ūd = Abū-Dā'ūd, Sunan Abī-Dā'ūd.
- A.J. = Arthur Jeffery, Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur'ān.
- A. Ya'lā = Abū-Ya'lā, Al-Aḥkām as-Sulṭāniyya.
- A. Zahū = Muḥammad Abū-Zahū, Al-Ḥadīth wa-l-Muḥaddithūn.
- A. Zur'a = Abū-Zur'a ad-Dimashqī, Tārīkh Dimashq.
- Abbott = Nabia Abbott, Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri.
- Abū-l-Fidā' = Abū-l-Fidā', Al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar.
- Adhkiyā' = Ibn-al-Jawzī, Kitāb al-Adhkiyā'.
- Aghā = Abū-l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, Al-Aghānī.
- 'Ajjāj = M. 'Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb, As-Sunna Qabl at-Tadwīn.
- Akhlāq = Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Al-Jāmi' li-Akhlāq ar-Rāwī.
- Akhbār = Abū-Ḥanīfa ad-Dīnawarī, Al-Khbār at-Ṭiwāl.
- Alfiyya = As-Sakhāwī, Faṭḥ al-Mughīth bi-Sharḥ Alfiyyat al-Ḥadīth.
- Amālī = Abū-'Alī al-Qālī, Al-Amālī.
- Amwāl = Abū-'Ubayd, Al-Amwāl.
- Arba'īn = 'Alī b. al-Faḍl al-Maqdisī, Al-Arba'īn al-Murattaba.

<u>Ashrāf</u>	= Al-Balādhurī, <u>Ansāb al-Ashrāf</u> .
<u>Asmā'</u>	= Ibn-Ḥazm, <u>Asmā' aṣ-Ṣaḥāba ar-Ruwāt</u> .
<u>Baghdād</u>	= Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, <u>Tārīkh Baghdād</u> .
<u>Bā'ith</u>	= Ibn-Kathīr, <u>Al-Bā'ith al-Ḥathīth</u> , <u>Sharḥ Ikhtišār 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth</u> .
<u>Bayhaqī</u>	= Al-Bayhaqī, <u>As-Sunan al-Kubrā</u> .
<u>Bidāya</u>	= Ibn-Kathīr, <u>Al-Bidāya wa-n-Nihāya</u> .
<u>Buhārī'nin</u>	= M.F. Sezgin, <u>Buhārī'nin Kaynakları</u> .
<u>Buḥūth</u>	= Akram Diyā' al-'Umarī, <u>Buḥūth fī Tārīkh as-Sunna</u> .
<u>Bukhārī</u>	= Al-Bukhārī, <u>Al-Jāmi' aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ</u> .
<u>Bukh. Ka.</u>	= Al-Bukhārī, <u>At-Tārīkh al-Kabīr</u> .
<u>Bukh. Ṣa.</u>	= Al-Bukhārī, <u>At-Tārīkh aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ</u> .
<u>Buldān</u>	= Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, <u>Mu'jam al-Buldān</u> .
<u>Burhān</u>	= Az-Zarkashī, <u>Al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān</u> .
<u>Damīrī</u>	= Ad-Damīrī, <u>Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān</u> .
<u>Dānī</u>	= Abū-'Amr ad-Dānī, <u>At-Taysīr fī al-Qirā'āt</u> .
<u>Dārimī</u>	= Ad-Dārimī, <u>Sunan ad-Dārimī</u> .
<u>Dāwudī</u>	= M. ad-Dāwudī, <u>Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn</u> .
<u>Dhahabī</u>	= Adh-Dhahabī, <u>Tārīkh al-Islām</u> .
<u>Durr</u>	= As-Suyūṭī, <u>Ad-Durr al-Manthūr</u> .
<u>Fahrasat</u>	= Ibn-Khayr al-Ishbīlī, <u>Fahrasat mā-Rawāhu 'an Shuyūkhīhi</u> .
<u>Fāsil</u>	= Ar-Rāmahurmuzī, <u>Al-Muḥaddith al-Fāsil</u> .
<u>Fath</u>	= Ibn-Ḥajar, <u>Fath al-Bārī</u> .

<u>Fihrist</u>	= Ibn-an-Nadīm, <u>Kitāb al-Fihrist</u> .
<u>Futū. Miş.</u>	= Ibn-‘Abd-al-Ḥakam, <u>Futūḥ Mişr.</u>
<u>Ghāya</u>	= Ibn-al-Jazarī, <u>Ghāyat an-Nihāya fī Ṭabaqāt al-Qurrā’.</u>
Goldziher	= I. Goldziher, <u>Muslim Studies</u> .
<u>Ḥadhfūn</u>	= Mu‘arrij as-Sadūsī, <u>Ḥadhfūn min Nasab Quraysh.</u>
<u>Hilya</u>	= Abū-Nu‘aym, <u>Hilyat al-Awliyā’.</u>
I. ‘Asākir	= Ibn-‘Asākir, <u>Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq.</u>
I. Ḥanb. <u>‘Ilal</u>	= Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, <u>Al-‘Ilal wa-Ma‘rifat ar-Rijāl.</u>
I. Ḥazm. <u>Iḥkām</u>	= Ibn-Hazm, <u>Al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām.</u>
I. Hishām	= Ibn-Hishām, <u>Sirat Rasūl-Allāh.</u>
I. Ka. <u>Taf.</u>	= Ibn-Kathīr, <u>Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān al-‘Aẓīm.</u>
I. Khāla.	= Ibn-Khālawayh, <u>Mukhtaṣar fī Shawādh al-Qur‘ān.</u>
I. Khall.	= Ibn-Khallikān, <u>Wafayāt al-A‘yān.</u>
I. Khay.	= Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, <u>Tārīkh Khalīfa.</u>
I. Khay. <u>Ṭab.</u>	= Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, <u>Ṭabaqāt Khalīfa.</u>
I. Ma.	= Ibn-Ma‘īn, <u>Al-‘Ilal wa-Ma‘rifat ar-Rijāl.</u>
I. Mājah	= Ibn-Mājah, <u>Sunan al-Muṣṭafā.</u>
I. Ma. <u>Tā.</u>	= Ibn-Ma‘īn, <u>At-Tārīkh wa-l-‘Ilal.</u>
I.Q. <u>‘Uyūn</u>	= Ibn-Qutayba, <u>‘Uyūn al-Akḥbār.</u>
I. Rushd	= Ibn-Rushd, <u>Bidāyat al-Mujtahid.</u>
I. Sa‘d	= Ibn-Sa‘d, <u>Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr.</u>
<u>Iḥyā’</u>	= Al-Ghazālī, <u>Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm ad-Dīn.</u>

- I'lām = Ibn-al-Qayyim, I'lām al-Muwaqqi'īn.
- I'lān = As-Sakhāwī, Al-I'lān bi-t-Tawbīkh.
- Imtiaz = Imtiaz Ahmad, The Significance of Sunna and Hadīth.
- 'Iqd = Ibn-'Abd-Rabbih, Al-'Iqd al-Farīd.
- Irshād = Al-Qaṣṭalānī, Irshād as-Sārī.
- Iṣāba = Ibn-Ḥajar, Al-Iṣāba fī Tamyīz aṣ-Ṣaḥāba.
- Istī'āb = Ibn-'Abd-al-Barr, Al-Istī'āb fī Ma'rifat al-Aṣḥāb.
- Itqān = As-Suyūṭī, Al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān.
- Ja'dī = Al-Ja'dī, Ṭabaqāt Fuqahā' al-Yaman.
- Jāh. Bay. = Al-Jāhiz, Al-Bayān wa-t-Tabyīn.
- Jāh. Hay. = Al-Jāhiz, Kitāb al-Ḥayawān.
- Jam' = Ibn-al-Qaysarānī, Kitāb al-Jam' Bayn Kitābay Abī-Naṣr al-Kalābādhī wa-Abī-Bakr al-Iṣbahānī.
- Jamhara = Ibn-Ḥazm, Jamharat Ansāb al-'Arab.
- Jāmi' = Ibn-'Abd-al-Barr, Jāmi' Bayān al-'Ilm.
- Jarḥ = Ibn-Abī-Ḥātim ar-Rāzī, Al-Jarḥ wa-t-Ta'dīl.
- Jaṣṣāṣ = Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, Aḥkām al-Qur'ān.
- Kashf = Ḥajjī Khalīfa, Kashf az-Ẓunūn.
- Kattā. = Al-Kattānī, Ar-Risāla al-Mustaṭrafa.
- Khiṭaṭ = Al-Miqrīzī, Al-Mawā'iz wa-l-I'tibār bi-Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-l-Āthār.

<u>Kifāya</u>	= Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, <u>Al-Kifāya</u> .
<u>Lisān</u>	= Ibn-Manẓūr, <u>Lisān al-‘Arab</u> .
<u>Lubāb</u>	= Ibn-al-Athīr al-Jazarī, <u>Al-Lubāb fī Tahdhīb al-Ansāb</u> .
<u>M. Jarḥ</u>	= Ibn-Abī-Ḥātim ar-Rāzī, <u>Taqdimat</u> <u>al-Ma‘rifa li-Kitāb al-Jarḥ wa-t-Ta‘dīl</u> .
<u>Ma‘ārif</u>	= Ibn-Qutayba, <u>Kitāb al-Ma‘ārif</u> .
<u>Madārik</u>	= Al-Qādī ‘Iyād, <u>Tartīb al-Madārik</u> .
<u>Majrūḥīn</u>	= Ibn-Ḥibbān al-Bustī, <u>Kitāb al-Majrūḥīn</u> .
<u>Ma‘mar</u>	= Ma‘mar b. Rāshid, <u>Jāmi‘ Ma‘mar</u> .
<u>Mansūkh</u>	= Ibn-Shihāb az-Zuhrī, <u>Mansūkh al-Qur‘ān</u> .
<u>Ma‘rifa</u>	= Al-Ḥākim an-Nīsābūrī, <u>Ma‘rifat ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth</u> .
<u>Maṣā.</u>	= Ibn-Abī-Dā‘ūd as-Sijistānī, <u>Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif</u> .
<u>Masālik</u>	= Abū-l-Qāsim M. al-Ḥawqalī, <u>Al-Masālik wa-l-Mamālik</u> .
<u>Mashāḥīr</u>	= Ibn-Ḥibbān al-Bustī, <u>Mashāḥīr ‘Ulamā’ al-Amṣār</u> .
<u>Māwardī</u>	= Al-Māwardī, <u>Al-Aḥkām as-Sultāniyya</u> .
<u>Miftāḥ</u>	= Ṭāshkupruzāda, <u>Miftāḥ as-Sa‘āda</u> .
<u>Mizzī</u>	= Abū-l-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf al-Mizzī, <u>Tahdhīb al-Kamāl</u> .
<u>Mudawwana</u>	= Saḥnūn, <u>Al-Mudawwana al-Kubrā</u> .
<u>Muḥabbar</u>	= Ibn-Ḥabīb, <u>Kitāb al-Muḥabbar</u> .
<u>Munammaq</u>	= Ibn-Ḥabīb, <u>Kitāb al-Munammaq</u> .
<u>Muṣa.</u>	= ‘Abd-ar-Razzāq b. Hammām aṣ-Ṣan‘ānī, <u>Al-Muṣannaf</u> .

<u>Muslim</u>	= Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj, <u>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim</u> .
<u>Musnad</u>	= Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, <u>Al-Musnad</u> .
<u>Murūj</u>	= Al-Mas'ūdī, <u>Murūj adh-Dhahab</u> .
<u>Musta.</u>	= Al-Ḥākim an-Nīsābūrī, <u>Al-Mustadrak</u> .
<u>Muwatṭa'</u>	= Mālīk b. Anas, <u>Al-Muwatṭa'</u> .
<u>MW</u>	= Al-Wāqidī, <u>Al-Maghāzī</u> .
<u>Nasab</u>	= Al-Muṣ'ab az-Zubayrī, <u>Nasab Quraysh</u> .
<u>Nasā'ī</u>	= An-Nasā'ī, <u>Sunan an-Nasā'ī</u> .
<u>Nashr</u>	= Ibn-al-Jazarī, <u>An-Nashr fī al-Qirā'āt</u> .
<u>Nawawī</u>	= An-Nawawī, <u>Tahdhīb al-Asmā' wa-l-Lughāt</u> .
<u>Nubalā'</u>	= Adh-Dhahabī, <u>Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'</u> .
<u>Nuzha</u>	= Ibn-al-Anbārī, <u>Nuzhat al-Alibbā'</u> .
<u>Qawā'id</u>	= Al-Qāsimī, <u>Qawā'id at-Taḥdīth</u> .
<u>Qubūl</u>	= Al-Balkhī, <u>Qubūl al-Akḥbār</u> .
<u>Qurrā'</u>	= Adh-Dhahabī, <u>Ṭabaqāt al-Qurrā'</u> .
<u>Qūt</u>	= Abū-Ṭālib al-Makkī, <u>Qūt al-Qulūb</u> .
<u>Qu. Taf.</u>	= Al-Qurṭubī, <u>Al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān</u> .
<u>Rijāl</u>	= Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj, <u>Rijāl 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr</u> .
<u>Riyāḍ</u>	= Yaḥyā al-'Āmirī al-Yamanī, <u>Ar-Riyāḍ al-Mustaṭāba</u> .
<u>S. 'Umar</u>	= Ibn-'Abd-al-Ḥakam, <u>Sīrat 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz</u> .
<u>Ṣaḥīfa</u>	= Hammām b. Munabbih, <u>Ṣaḥīfat Hammām</u> .
<u>Sam'ānī</u>	= As-Sam'ānī, <u>Adab al-Imlā' wa-l-Istimlā'</u> .
<u>Schacht</u>	= J. Schacht, <u>The Origins of Muḥammadan Jurisprudence</u> .

Sezgin	= Sezgin, <u>Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums.</u>
Shāfi'ī	= Ash-Shāfi'ī, <u>Al-Musnad.</u>
<u>Shadharāt</u>	= Ibn-al-'Imād, <u>Shadharāt adh-Dhahab.</u>
Sibā'ī	= As-Sibā'ī, <u>As-Sunna wa-Makānatuhā.</u>
<u>Şifa</u>	= Ibn-al-Jawzī, <u>Şifat aş-Şafwa.</u>
<u>Şubḥ al-A'shā</u>	= Al-Qalqashandī, <u>Şubḥ al-A'shā fī Şinā'at al-Inshā.</u>
Ṭab.	= Aṭ-Ṭabarī, <u>Tārīkh ar-Rusul wa-l-Mulūk.</u>
Ṭab. Taf.	= Aṭ Ṭabarī, <u>Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān.</u>
<u>Tadhk.</u>	= Adh-Dhahabī, <u>Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz.</u>
<u>Tadrīb</u>	= As-Suyūṭī, <u>Tadrīb ar-Rāwī.</u>
<u>Tafsīr</u>	= 'Abd-ar-Razzāq b. Hammām aş-Şan'ānī, <u>Tafsīr 'Abd-ar-Razzāq.</u>
<u>Tahdh.</u>	= Ibn-Ḥajar, <u>Tahdhīb at-Tahdhīb.</u>
<u>Tāj</u>	= Murtaḍa az-Zabīdī, <u>Tāj al-'Arūs.</u>
<u>Talkh.</u>	= Adh-Dhahabī, <u>Talkhīṣ al-Mustadrak.</u>
<u>Tamhīd</u>	= Ibn-'Abd-al-Barr, <u>At-Tamhīd.</u>
<u>Tanwīr</u>	= As-Suyūṭī, <u>Tanwīr al-Ḥawālik.</u>
<u>Tanzīl</u>	= Ibn-Shihāb az-Zuhrī, <u>Tanzīl al-Qur'ān.</u>
<u>Taqyīd</u>	= Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, <u>Taqyīd al-'Ilm.</u>
<u>Tarājim</u>	= Adh-Dhahabī, <u>Tarājim Rijāl Rawā</u> <u>'Anhum Muḥammad Ibn-Ishāq.</u>
<u>Tawjīh</u>	= Ṭāhīr al-Jazā'irī, <u>Tawjīh an-Nazar.</u>
<u>Ta'wīl</u>	= Ibn-Qutayba, <u>Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān.</u>
<u>Ṭayālisī</u>	= Aṭ-Ṭayālisī, <u>Musnad aṭ-Ṭayālisī.</u>

Tirmidhī	= At-Tirmidhī, <u>Ṣaḥīḥ at-Tirmidhī.</u>
<u>‘Ulūm</u>	= Ibn-aṣ-Ṣalāh, <u>‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth.</u>
<u>‘Umda</u>	= Ibn-Rashīq al-Qayrawānī, <u>Al-‘Umda fī Ṣinā‘at ash-Shi‘r.</u>
<u>Umm</u>	= Ash-Shāfi‘ī, <u>Kitāb al-Umm.</u>
<u>Usd</u>	= Ibn-al-Athīr al-Jazarī, <u>Usd al-Ghāba.</u>
<u>Wāfī</u>	= Aṣ-Ṣafadī, <u>Al-Wāfī bi-l-Wafayāt.</u>
<u>Wathā‘iq</u>	= M. Ḥamīdullāh, <u>Majmū‘at al-Wathā‘iq as-Siyāsiyya.</u>
Zama.	= Az-Zamakhsharī, <u>Al-Kashshāf.</u>
Zuhayr	= Abū-Khaythama Zuhayr b. Ḥarb, <u>Kitāb al-‘Ilm.</u>
Zurqānī	= Az-Zurqānī, <u>Sharḥ az-Zurqānī ‘alā Muwaṭṭa’ Mālik.</u>

INTRODUCTION

One who reads the works related to Qur'ānic sciences, Tradition, Jurisprudence, the Life History of the Prophet and Genealogy cannot fail to come across the valuable narrations, observations and opinions of az-Zuhrī (52-124 A.H.) which, while forming an integral part of the materials of those books, indicate the intellectual supremacy of az-Zuhrī, and the eminent place which he had earned for himself among the ancient Muslim scholars.

Many modern scholars and researchers in the field of Islamic studies have noticed and drawn attention, in their works, to the importance of az-Zuhrī and to the prominent place which he occupies in the realm of Islamic scholarship. None of them has produced a work of independent research on his life and scholarship. The writer of the present thesis will attempt to fill some part of this gap.

The thesis is broadly divided into two parts. The first part, which is devoted to the study of az-Zuhrī's life, consists of two chapters. Chapter I deals with the tribe, clan and family of az-Zuhrī, his birth and childhood, his educational attainments in Mecca and Medina, the efforts which he exerted in the path of seeking knowledge, and the teachers who left a deep impression on him. Chapter II seeks to survey his first

journey to Damascus, the Ummayyad capital, and the relationship which he had with the Ummayyad caliphs: 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān, al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik, Sulaymān b. 'Abd-al-Malik, 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz, Yazīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik and Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik. It also analyses the positions which he held under them, the works in which he engaged under their patronage and the influence which he exerted upon them; and the eminent intellectual position which he held among the scholars of his period, and the lively interest which he displayed in disseminating the religious sciences.

The second part, which is devoted to the study of az-Zuhrī's scholarship in Qur'ānic sciences and Tradition (ḥadīth and sunna) - the most significant of all the religious sciences in which he distinguished himself - also consists of two chapters. In chapter III an attempt is made to examine the most important viewpoints of az-Zuhrī in the Qur'ānic readings, to indicate the reading which he has selected from the seven original readings of the Qur'ān and his method in Qur'ānic exegesis; and to analyse his works, Tanzīl al-Qur'ān and Mansūkh al-Qur'ān, which have reached us in manuscript form. Chapter IV deals with his activities in the teaching and popularising of Traditions and in preserving them from distortion and fabrication; the role which he played in criticising the fabricated Traditions; his methods in the transmission of

Traditions and his role in their codification and compilation, and his sources.

Along with the two chapters in the second part of the thesis, the writer cherished a desire to write three further independent chapters dealing with the learning and scholarship of az-Zuhrī in Jurisprudence, in the Life History of the Prophet and in Genealogy. He had already collected the materials needed for the writing of those chapters: but the time allowed for the preparation of this thesis prevented the realization of this ideal. He hopes to add these three chapters to the thesis before its publication.

All that he intends at present, therefore, is to attain successfully the objective of presenting to the reader a true and vivid picture of the life of az-Zuhrī, of the eagerness and enthusiasm which he displayed in the pursuit of knowledge and of the deep influence which he exerted in respect of Qur'ānic sciences and Tradition.

PART I

THE LIFE OF AZ-ZUHRI

CHAPTER ONE

AZ-ZUHRĪ'S EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

(i) His tribe and clan

For various reasons, the Quraysh occupied the highest position among the 'Arabian tribes in the Jāhilīyya and in the post-Islamic period. In the first place, it was the tribe of Mecca - the important religious and commercial centre.¹ It was also the tribe of the Prophet and the caliphs after him. Moreover, it was from this tribe that there emerged all those 'Arabian families which occupy important positions in the history of Islām and are responsible for its glorious past.

The tribe of Quraysh consisted of a number of clans - Banū-Hāshim, Banū-al-Muṭṭalib, Banū-Taym, Banū-Asad, Banū-Makhzūm, Banū-'Abd-Shams, Banū-Jumah, Banū-'Adī and Banū-Zuhra etc.; the last mentioned being the clan to which az-Zuhrī belonged.²

The Banū-Zuhra clan had taken part in all the important events of Mecca. They were party to various political pacts concluded in the Jāhilīyya period between

1) See Qur'ān, II, 125-128, 144-150.; III, 96, 97.; cvi, 1-4; Ashrāf, i, 51-59.

2) Ḥadhfūn, 64.; Jamhara, 130.

the clans of the Quraysh tribe to settle their internal disputes and differences. They always associated themselves with the Prophet's clan Banū-Hāshim, and participated in the confederation of Muṭayyabūn (ḥilf al-muṭayyabīn),³ the confederation of Fuḍūl (ḥilf al-fuḍūl),⁴ and joined them in the task of rebuilding the Ka'ba.⁵

When the Prophet invited the people to Islām, Banū-Zuhra readily responded to the call. Among the early converts were 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. 'Awf (d. 32 A.H.), Sa'd b. Abī-Waqqāṣ (d. 55 A.H.) and 'Abd-Allāh b. Shihāb (?) the great-grandfather of az-Zuhrī.⁶ The last-mentioned convert was originally named 'Abd-al-Jānn. Following the well-known practice of changing those names which conveyed a sense inconsistent with the teachings of Islām, the Prophet changed the name of 'Abd-al-Jānn to 'Abd-Allāh at the time of his conversion.

The Zuhri's (az-Zuhrīyyūn) were proud of being the maternal uncles of the Prophet. Āmina-bint-Wahb, the

3) Munammaq, 42 ff.; 222 ff.; Nasab, 383.

4) Munammaq, 94 ff.; 217 ff.

5) I. Sa'd, I, i, 93.

6) I. Sa'd, IV, i, 92-93. Ḥadhfūn, 61-63.

Prophet's mother, belonged to the clan of Banū-Zuhra.⁷

In the battle of Badr, when the Quraysh came out to fight against the Prophet, the Zuhri's (on account of their relationship with him) withdrew from the troops of the Polytheists and returned to Mecca without participating in the battle.⁸

Ibn-Qutayba, however, reports that a few Zuhri's took part in this battle and fought from the side of the Polytheists. Among these, he reports, was the maternal great-grandfather of az-Zuhri, known as 'Abd-Allāh.⁹ When, in later life, az-Zuhri was asked: "Did your grandfather take part in the battle of Badr?", he evasively replied: "Yes, but from the other side," meaning 'the side of the polytheists'.¹⁰ This answer silenced the questioner who had intentionally put az-Zuhri in an embarrassing situation.

It appears that Ibn-Qutayba and others had mistakenly mixed up the battle of Badr with that of Uhud. The early reliable sources show that while none of the Zuhri's took part in the battle of Badr, they definitely fought against the Prophet in the battle of Uhud. It was in this latter

7) Ma'ārif, 43.

8) MW, i, 45, 200. Tab. ii, 438.

9) Ma'ārif, 162.

10) Istī'āb, iii, 927.

battle that az-Zuhrī's great-grandfather had associated himself with the polytheists and fought against the Prophet. He, along with other four, had sworn to slay the Prophet in this battle.¹¹ Bent upon killing the Prophet, these five got near to the Prophet and inflicted several injuries upon him. His face and forehead were wounded by az-Zuhrī's great-grandfather.¹² It is said that the Prophet cursed all the five assailants as a result of which they, including az-Zuhrī's great-grandfather, met with tragic deaths one by one.¹³

Although az-Zuhrī's great-grandfather was one of the above five accursed persons, the Zuhiris in later times refused to admit it. They denied that az-Zuhrī's great-grandfather had inflicted injuries on the Prophet's body. On the other hand, they claimed that, "he (az-Zuhrī's great-grandfather) had embraced Islam and had died in Mecca."¹⁴

The issue was very delicate and could affect the reputation of his family: so az-Zuhrī remained silent on the subject. His silence over this matter makes the

11) MW, i, 238, 243-244.

12) I. Hishām, ii, 80.; MW, i, 245, 248.

13) MW, i, 245 ff. I. Sa'd, IV, i, 92-93.

14) Ashrāf, i, 324.

claim dubious. We find no report which explains which of the two great-grandfathers embraced Islām and which of them wounded the Prophet. Undoubtedly az-Zuhrī's silence is meaningful. The variations and contradictions in the reports about his great-grandfathers make it well-nigh impossible to reach any definite conclusion.¹⁵

Although many prominent personalities of Banū-Zuhra played an important role in the history of Islām and made considerable contributions in the political and educational fields during the first century after the Hijra and thereafter,¹⁶ none of them was well-known by his nisba instead of his real name except our Zuhrī. He was popularly known among his people by his nisba (az-Zuhrī), so that his real name (Muḥammad) was almost forgotten. Besides his nisba, he was also well-known by the name of one of his great-grandfathers, called: "Shihāb". So, whenever we find the name 'Ibn-Shihāb' or the nisba 'az-Zuhrī', they mean one and the same person:¹⁷ Muḥammad

15) See I. Sa'd, IV, i, 92-93.; Usd, iii, 184.;
Iṣāba, ii, 325.

16) I. Khay., i, 34-35.; Lubāb, i, 513.

17) See I. Ḥanb., 'Ilal, i, 167 where it is reported that Mālīk b. Anas used to mention az-Zuhrī only by the name 'Ibn-Shihāb'; and that he was known in Medina only by this name and not by his nisba.

b. Muslim b. 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Shihāb b. 'Abd-Allāh b. al-Ḥārith b. Zuhra b. Kilāb b. Murra b. Ka'b b. Lu'ay' b. Ghālib b. Fihr. This 'Fihr' was also known as Quraysh.¹⁸ Thus we see that az-Zuhrī was related to the Prophet through their common grandfather Kilāb b. Murra. It was due to this relationship with the Prophet that az-Zuhrī boasted of his genealogy and preferred the Qurayshite to non-Qurayshite scholars. It is reported that he refrained from narrating aḥādīth from the Anṣār for a long period of time. Later, he gave up this prejudice on the advice of caliph 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān (65-86).¹⁹

As regards the mawālī - the non-'Arab scholars - he did not transmit ḥadīth from them for a considerable length of time. He preferred their colleagues, the 'Arabs, who were descendents of the Companions - the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār. His attitude aroused criticism and met with disapproval. He explained his position by saying that his non-reporting from the mawālī was not due to party-prejudice ('aṣabīyya) but because, in his eyes, they were less reliable than their 'Arab friends.²⁰

- 18) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 490b.; Ḥadhfūn, 64 and Mizzī, X, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī'.
- 19) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 498b.; Dhahabī, V, 139-140.
- 20) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 135.; I. 'Asākir, XIV, 498.; Nubalā', V, i, 102b.; Fāṣil, iv, 41a.

(ii) His birth and childhood

Az-Zuhrī's father Muslim b. 'Ubayd-Allāh and his mother, 'Ā'isha,²¹ lived in Mecca, where their first child named 'Abd-Allāh was born.²² After some time, in 52 A.H., a second child was born to them. They named him Muḥammad and gave the kunya Abū-Bakr. Later, he was known as 'Ibn-Shihāb' and 'az-Zuhrī'.²³ After this child, a

21) Mizzī, X, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī'.

22) Ma'ārif, 163.

23) As regards the year when az-Zuhrī was born opinions differ. The probable dates of his birth according to variant reports are 50 A.H., 51 A.H., 52 A.H., 56 A.H., 58 A.H., and 61 A.H. Aḥmad b. Ṣāliḥ al-Miṣrī (d. 248 A.H.), who made a thorough study on az-Zuhrī's life and his aḥādīth, chooses 50 A.H. as az-Zuhrī's year of birth. He says: "In fact, I heard no definite year for az-Zuhrī's birth." A study of all the varying reports suggests that the most probable year of his death is 124 A.H. Among these reports is that of az-Zuhrī's son-in-law and nephew named Muḥammad (d. 152 A.H.), who stated that, az-Zuhrī lived for 72 years. From this it appears that he was born in 52 A.H.

cf. I. 'Asākir, XIV, 494a.; Mizzī, X, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī'.; Nubalā', V, 95b.

daughter was born²⁴ about whom nothing has been mentioned in the sources available to us.

In his early childhood, az-Zuhrī remained under the guardianship of his parents. It appears that the financial condition of his small family at this stage was sound. His father was, therefore, in a position to send him and his brother 'Abd-Allāh to a kuttāb near the house. There az-Zuhrī received his early education and acquired a basic knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic. He also memorised easy and short sūras of the Qur'ān. It was soon discovered that he was very intelligent. He surpassed his brother 'Abd-Allāh and showed his supremacy over him in his ability to memorise, and in his careful attention to lessons. He memorised the whole Qur'ān in a very short time, a feat which surprised his parents, the teachers of the kuttāb and the family friends.²⁵ Perceiving his extraordinary intelligence, they forecast for him a great academic future if he continued his studies.

In 63 A.H., when az-Zuhrī was eleven years old, the Meccan leader 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr (d. 72 A.H.) revolted against the Umayyad rule and proclaimed himself a caliph. Almost all the Meccans followed him. Among them was

24) I. Asākir, XIV, 492b.

25) Bukh. Ka., 220.; I. 'Asākir, XIV, 496a, where it is reported that he learnt the Qur'ān by heart in 80 nights.

az-Zuhrī's father, who associated himself with the Zubayrid party and worked zealously for its cause. Not only did he help the Zubayrids in their preparation to attack the Umayyads; but he took an active part in the revolt²⁶ and in various campaigns against the Umayyads and their supporters in Ḥijāz, 'Irāq and Palestine. On account of his sincere and whole-hearted support of the Zubayrid cause, Muṣ'ab b. az-Zubayr (d. 71 A.H.), the deputy leader of the Zubayrid party, allowed him to join his party and included him among his trusted and close friends.²⁷

At first, the Zubayrids achieved success and took control over a few countries under the Umayyads. Muṣ'ab b. az-Zubayr, 'Abd-Allāh's brother, was appointed governor of Medina in 65 A.H.²⁸ It was, perhaps, at this time that az-Zuhrī's family moved to Medina to join Muṣ'ab and to remain in his service. Muslim b. 'Ubayd-Allāh, who, in his official capacity, was coming to Medina with Muṣ'ab, did not think it proper to leave his family behind in Mecca. He, therefore, called them to Medina where some of his relatives and a large section of the Banū-Zuhra were already staying. He remained there with Muṣ'ab till 66 A.H. In 67 A.H., a worsening political situation in

26) Ma'ārif, 162.

27) I. Khall., i, 571.

28) Ṭab., V, 622.

‘Irāq forced ‘Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr to send his brother Muṣ‘ab there. He appointed him its governor in order to control the situation and crush the uprising.²⁹ When Muṣ‘ab moved to ‘Irāq, az-Zuhrī's father accompanied him, leaving his family in Medina, because it was a safer place for their life and future. Moreover, the governor of Medina in place of Muṣ‘ab was one of his friends named Jābir b. al-Aswad az-Zuhrī - a man from Banū-Zuhra.³⁰ On leaving for ‘Irāq, az-Zuhrī's father asked the new governor to look after his two teenage sons and to keep them under his guardianship till his return from ‘Irāq. At the same time, he advised his sons to call on ‘Abd-Allāh b. Tha‘laba b. Ṣu‘ayr, an ally of Banū-Zuhra and scholar of genealogy, to learn the science of genealogy from him. Az-Zuhrī himself tells us: "I used to call on ‘Abd-Allah b. Tha‘laba b. Ṣu‘ayr al-‘Udhri to learn from him the genealogy of my tribe; for he was its ally and was well versed in its genealogy."³¹

Despite the fact that circumstances separated az-Zuhrī from his father, he pursued his studies diligently and did not disappoint him in this respect. In fact, his stay in Medina, the great educational centre,

29) Ashrāf, V, 231.; Tab., vi, 93.

30) Tab., vi, 139.

31) I. Sa‘d, II, ii, 131.; Dhahabī, v, 138.

provided him with a good opportunity to receive the best education.

His father's stay in 'Irāq was the cause of much concern for him and his family. Very often they were scared and wished that he could return home soon. But he could return from his long hazardous journey only after the fall of the Zubayrids in 'Irāq. They were defeated by the Umayyads, fighting under the leadership of 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān, in the battle in which Muṣ'ab b. az-Zubayr was killed in 71 A.H.³² Az-Zuhrī met his father after a long period of separation and found him in a very depressed and tragic state. Whenever he recalled the bloody events of 'Irāq he was filled with sorrow. There was none but az-Zuhrī's mother to console him in his mournings.

Politically, the condition of Medina soon began to deteriorate. The Umayyad advances and their victories became a source of fright to their enemies.³³ The person most affected by the total collapse of the Zubayrid rebellion in 73 A.H. was az-Zuhrī, who met with great hardships and became a victim of several tragedies. His

32) Ṭab., vi, 151 ff.; I. Khay., i, 340 where it is reported that he was killed in 72 A.H.

33) Ashrāf, v, 373.; Ṭab., vi, 195.

father, who died soon after his return from 'Irāq, left no property - moveable or immoveable - by which his sons could support themselves. He was greatly in debt: and, after his death, the creditors asked his sons to repay the loans taken by their father.³⁴ Az-Zuhrī's tragic life became worse when he, along with others, was victimised by the Umayyads who deprived them of their legal rights, discontinued all financial assistance from the state and removed their names from the dīwān.

Notwithstanding his being an orphan, his name being removed from the dīwān and being heavily in debt,³⁵ az-Zuhrī pursued his studies regularly and continued to sit in the circles of scholars in the Mosque of Medina.

(iii) His education in Medina

Az-Zuhrī received his early education in one of the katātib (the plural of kuttāb) of Mecca. The katātib of those days were the equivalent of the primary schools

34) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 499a.

35) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 498b.; Dhahabī, v, 139, 146.

of our times, and performed some of their functions.³⁶

Az-Zuhrī in one of these katātīb acquired the basic knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic. He also memorised the whole of the Qur'ān. His intelligence and powerful memory made it possible for him to complete his primary education within a few years.

When he had finished his primary education in the kuttāb, his father decided to send him to the Great Mosque of Mecca where he could join the circles of eminent scholars and continue his further education. In these days the masjid was the seat of higher education which a student joined after completing his early education in the kuttāb.³⁷ Hence, the decision of az-Zuhrī's father to send his son to the mosque. Before az-Zuhrī could join the Meccan mosque and enter into the second stage of his educational career however, his father had to leave Mecca for Medina (taking his family with him) to join Muṣ'ab b. az-Zubayr. Thus az-Zuhrī, instead of receiving his higher education in Mecca, received it in Medina. Here he

36) Akhlāq, 35a.; Aḥmad Shalabī, History of Muslim Education, p. 1 ff where ample information is found regarding kuttāb and masjid, their role in the education movement, and their history.

37) Akhlāq, 39b.

developed his thoughts and built up his academic personality. In fact, his arrival and stay in Medina became the cause of his future fame. The academic standard of Medina was much higher than that of Mecca. Moreover, there was a group of scholars and senior teachers in the field of Islāmic learning in particular and education in general. Az-Zuhrī studied under these eminent scholars and thereby achieved astounding success.

(a) Az-Zuhrī in the Prophet's mosque

The Prophet's mosque in Medina was the centre of all educational activities - a meeting place of teachers and students, both local and foreigners, who came from all corners of the Islāmic world. In this mosque the classes were held, the lectures delivered, seminars conducted and discussions arranged. Every teacher in this mosque had established his own study circle consisting of himself and his students. According to usual practice, the teacher of the circle used to sit against a wall or pillar of the mosque and his students surrounded him from all sides. These pupils were of different ages, for there was no fixed age when a student could join the study circle. The number of students in the study circle (ḥalqa) varied from few to many. Sometimes the ḥalqa formed by one row of students sitting in a circle. Sometimes there would be several rows of students sitting in circles, one within the other. Sometimes the ḥalqa was very big, and sometimes very small, depending on the

fame and reputation of the scholar. The scholars of these circles, unlike the teachers of the katātīb,³⁸ accepted no remuneration for their services; for to take remuneration for imparting religious education in the mosque was regarded as an uncommendable and reprehensible act.³⁹

The teaching in the Medina mosque used to start after the fajr prayer⁴⁰ and continued throughout the day except during the times of prayers and when the teachers or students needed some rest. It came to an end just before the maghrib prayer at sunset. The teachers began their lectures with recitation of a few verses from the Qur'ān followed by their interpretation; or with the narration of a ḥadīth followed by its elucidation and commentary, or with the presentation of a legal ruling (mas'ala fihiyya) followed by an explanation. Very often, the lectures consisted of questions and answers between the students and teachers. The teacher did not always confine himself to one particular subject. Sometimes, during his lectures (or while replying to a question) he would shift from one subject, say the tafsīr,

38) Dhahabī, v, 226.

39) Dhahabī, v, 226.; S. 'Umar, 167.; I.Q. 'Uyūn, ii, 131.

40) I. Sa'd, v, 141.; Iḥyā', i, 110.

to another one like the ḥadīth, the fiqh, the sīra or the maghāzī. Whenever he himself felt tired or found his students weary he would turn towards literature and poetry and recite some odes and interesting verses to dispel the boredom and weariness. A knowledge of poetry was, therefore, essential for the success and popularity of a teacher.⁴¹

41) Akhlāq, 136a ff.

The study circles in the mosque of Mecca and in the Prophet's mosque in Medina are held to this day in more or less the same fashion as we have described here. I myself have received a large part of my education in the mosque of Mecca in exactly the same manner as az-Zuhrī did. Before starting my educational career at the mosque of Mecca my father sent me to a kuttāb where I acquired the basic knowledge of reading, dictation, and arithmetic and memorised a few portions of the Qur'ān. During my studies there, I used wooden tablets, reed pens, and inkpots for improving my handwriting. Although the study circles are still held in these two mosques, the institution of katātīb is almost extinct. The days of reed pens and wooden tablets are also now over.

It was in this manner that education was imparted in the principal mosques of each town and in the Prophet's mosque at Medina when az-Zuhrī moved to this city. During his student days, the prominent study circles in the Prophet's mosque were those of Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib (d. 94 A.H.), the greatest jurist from amongst the Successors, and at that time head of the school of Medina; of Abū-Bakr b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith b. Hishām (d. 94 A.H.), the pious saint from amongst the Quraysh; of 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Utba b. Mas'ūd (d. 98 A.H.) the great jurist poet; of Khārija b. Zayd b. Thābit (d. 100 A.H.), the scholar of Anṣārs; of Abū Salama b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. 'Awf (d. 104 A.H.); and of Sulaymān b. Yasār (d. 107 A.H.), the scholar of mawālī; and, lastly, the study circle (established after 73 A.H.) of 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr (d. 94 A.H.) the scholar of Quraysh described as 'an inexhaustible ocean.'⁴²

42) The scholars mentioned here were the famous teachers of az-Zuhrī. They, along with others, will be discussed in detail in chapter 4.

The epithets (alqāb) which we have used for these scholars were the same by which they were known in their lifetime and after their death. They are so known in the historical and biographical works as well.

During his studies in the Prophet's mosque, az-Zuhrī was not attached to these famous circles. He had joined less well known circles which, instead of teaching ḥadīth and fiqh as taught by famous study circles, concentrated on the teaching of genealogy, poetry and language. This clearly shows that, in the beginning, az-Zuhrī was interested in language and literature. After some time, however, due to an interesting event, he turned to religious education.

At first he wanted to become a scholar of genealogy or a poet. So he joined the circles of Tha'labā b. Abī-Mālik and 'Abd-Allāh b. Tha'labā b. Ṣu'ayr al-'Udhri,⁴³ the scholars of genealogy. The latter, in az-Zuhrī's words, was: "an authority on the genealogy of Quraysh."⁴⁴ Az-Zuhrī also joined the circle of Ṣāliḥ b. Kaysān - the scholar of poetry and language - to learn the language, to memorise and compose poems, and to attain mastery in speech and eloquence. About Ṣāliḥ, Ibn-Ḥanbal comments: "Ṣāliḥ b. Kaysān had mastery over poetry and rare words and phrases. He used to say to az-Zuhrī: "I made you eloquent of speech."⁴⁵

43) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 131.

44) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 131.; Bukh. Ṣa, 108.;
Dhahabī, v, 138.

45) I. Ḥanb., 'Ilal, i, 359.

Similarly, Sa'd b. Ibrāhim reported: "Ṣāliḥ b. Kaysān was the instructor of Ibn-Shihāb. Sometimes when Ibn-Shihāb retorted to Ṣāliḥ, the latter used to say: 'You (now) dare return an answer to me when it was me who straightened the curve of your tongue.' "⁴⁶

Az-Zuhrī used to frequent these three study circles daily. He attended the lectures on genealogy and listened carefully to the compositions of the poets. For a few years he devoted himself to the study of genealogy and attained mastery over it. He memorised a large collection of poems and learned the rules and measures of poetry. He employed the knowledge of all these in his latter life when he composed a book on the genealogy of Arabs, which appears to be the first work on the subject:⁴⁷ and when he collected in several

46) Mizzī, v, under the heading "Ṣāliḥ b. Kaysān".

It is worth mentioning here that Ṣāliḥ had taught az-Zuhrī poetry and language. Later, when az-Zuhrī took up the ḥadīth, he persuaded his teacher Ṣāliḥ to join him in this subject. Ṣāliḥ agreed to his suggestion and became his fellow student in ḥadīth.

47) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 501a.; Jamhara, 5, where it is reported that az-Zuhrī was the best scholar on genealogy.

volumes the poems (ash'ār) which he had memorised during his student days. A reference to these volumes is found in the following report:

"Yūnus b. Yazīd reports that once when I asked az-Zuhrī to give me his books he brought to me the volumes containing poems (kutuban fīhā shi'r)."⁴⁸

Az-Zuhrī used to quote verses in his usual conversation, while teaching his students and in reporting events of sīra and maghāzi.⁴⁹ Moreover, he himself composed poetry: but, with the exception of very few verses like the ones which he recited advising the prince 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān, none of his compositions has come down to us.⁵⁰

(b) In the study circle of Sa'id b. al-Musayyib

One day when az-Zuhrī was sitting in the study circle of 'Abd-Allāh b. Tha'laba, a man came and asked Ibn-Tha'laba to give a juristic ruling in a case regarding divorce. Ibn-Tha'laba could not answer the query of the questioner and asked him to go to the study circle of Sa'id b. al-Musayyib, where he would find the

48) Jāmi', i, 77.; I. 'Asākir, XIV, 501a.

49) Bidāya, ix, 347.; Hilya, iii, 370.

50) Marzubānī, Mu'jam ash-Shu'arā', 345-346.

correct ruling on that problem.⁵¹ Az-Zuhrī was surprised at the inability of his teacher to solve the problem and at his being unaware of the legal ruling on this issue, especially as he was one of those Companions who had had the privilege of meeting the Prophet and were expected to have the knowledge of fiqh. When the questioner left 'Abd-Allāh b. Tha'laba, az-Zuhrī took leave of his teacher and followed the questioner till they reached the circle of Ibn-al-Musayyib.⁵² When az-Zuhrī heard the reply of Ibn-al-Musayyib, he was highly impressed by the latter's profound knowledge of fiqh, by his commanding presence and by the great respect in which he was held by the people around him. Finding Sa'id b. al-Musayyib in such an exalted position, he left for good the circle of Ibn-Tha'laba and the circles teaching genealogy and poetry and joined the circle of Ibn-al-Musayyib to commence the study of ḥadīth and fiqh. This study opened to him the door to a bright academic future, and made it possible for him to climb, step by step, the ladder of fame. He remained in the circle of Ibn-al-Musayyib for a long time. Some reports say for ten years; others suggest

51) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 131.

52) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 131.; Dhahabī, v, 138.

a lesser period of time. 53

Ibn-al-Musayyib opened a new horizon of knowledge for az-Zuhrī. Finding him an energetic and industrious student who showed great love for learning and scholarship, Ibn-al-Musayyib paid much attention to him and enriched him with the store of knowledge he possessed.

Az-Zuhrī showed great respect for his teacher

- 53) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 131.; Bukh., Sa, 108 where Mālik reports that Ibn-Shihāb considered Ibn-al-Musayyib the best scholar of the age and attended his lectures for seven years.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric 'Ibn-Shihāb' where Ma'mar and Mālik report: "Az-Zuhrī said that I sat with Ibn-al-Musayyib for eight years so humbly that my knees were touching his knees - a posture in which the lectures were attended in the ḥalaqāt." Again Mālik reports that az-Zuhrī said: "I sat with him for ten years but it seemed that it was just one day."
cf. Mizzī, x, under the rubric "Ibn-Shihāb'.;
I. 'Asākir, XIV, 500b.

Ibn-al-Musayyib. Whenever he wanted to clarify certain points, he put the questions in a most respectful manner. He himself states: "Ibn-al-Musayyib deserved great respect on account of his great piety, integrity, uprightness and truthfulness, even before kings and other ruling authorities. He was unrivalled in his scholarship and sound opinion - the latter being the best helper. He was fully confident in his opinions, but he also listened to other people's viewpoints and accepted them if he found them to be correct. Whenever I wanted to draw his attention to a certain problem and find an answer from him, I said to him that such and such a person said so-and-so and others have mentioned so-and-so. Hearing this, he used to clarify the issue and give his considered opinions."⁵⁴

The above statement of az-Zuhrī shows that he was highly impressed by the personality of Ibn-al-Musayyib. Since he had associated himself with the latter for a long time and had attended his lectures regularly, he had memorised all the aḥādīth narrated by him and all his legal and non-legal opinions (āṛā'). In this way, he had learnt all that Ibn-al-Musayyib knew. That is why, in later life, whatever he heard from Ibn-al-Musayyib was nothing more than repetition of a narration which he

54) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 131.

had already heard. Az-Zuhrī himself reports: "I attended Ibn-al-Musayyib's lectures for so long that whenever in later times I heard something it was nothing but repetition."⁵⁵

Az-Zuhrī, after Ibn-al-Musayyib's death, became the legal heir of his teacher's knowledge and narrated his aḥādīth to his own students. He himself claims to be an authority on Ibn-al-Musayyib, as is evident from the following statement of Ḥakīm b. Ḥakīm. He reports: "When I said to Ibn-Shihāb that Rabī'a b. Abī-'Abd-ar-Raḥmān had so reported from Sa'id b. al-Musayyib, Ibn-Shihāb remarked that Rabī'a had made a mistake (wahima). I was more careful than him in preserving and remembering the aḥādīth narrated by Sa'id b. al-Musayyib."⁵⁶ This statement is by no means an exaggeration. Ibn-al-Musayyib himself knew az-Zuhrī's strong retentive memory by which he had memorised traditions as narrated by him and anything else he heard. As regards memorisation of the latter, we find the following report of 'Abd-al-'Azīz. He says: "Abd-al-Malik reprimanded the people of Medina in a long letter which consisted of two ṭūmār. This letter was read before the public from the pulpit of the mosque. Afterwards, when Ibn-al-Musayyib's disciples gathered

55) A. Zur'a, V, 63b.; Nubalā', V, 1, 102a.;
Dhahabī, V, 142.

56) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 500a.

around him he asked whether one of them could apprise him of the contents of the letter. Some of them related its contents to him; but it appeared that Ibn-al-Musayyib was not satisfied with the report. Ibn-Shihāb realised this, and said: 'Would you like (to hear) O Abū-Muḥammad - Ibn-al-Musayyib's kunya - the full text of the letter?' 'Yes', replied Ibn-al-Musayyib. Az-Zuhrī thereupon related the contents of the whole letter from memory. He reproduced the whole letter in such a way that it appeared that he was holding the letter in his hand and reading it."⁵⁷ Ibn-al-Musayyib was naturally highly impressed by his wonderful memory and praised him. Az-Zuhrī says that Ibn-al-Musayyib on several occasions paid tribute to him in these words: "A person who leaves behind a son like you never dies."⁵⁸

Ibn-al-Musayyib devoted his time and energy generously to the special training of his pupil az-Zuhrī. Thus he prepared him to become his successor in the field of learning and scholarship in Medina, especially in the propagation of ḥadīth and sunna. Ibn-al-Musayyib's hopes were not frustrated: for az-Zuhrī did become what his teacher wanted him to be - "the best scholar of

57) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 499b.

58) Dhahabī, V, 140. The caliph 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān also paid tribute to him in exactly the same words.

Medina", (a'lam ahl al-Madīna), as stated by Sufyān b. 'Uyayna.⁵⁹

(c) In the study circle of other scholars

When az-Zuhrī felt that he had learned all he could from Ibn-al-Musayyib, he left his study circle and joined the study circles of other scholars in the Prophet's mosque. Foremost among these may be mentioned those of Abū-Bakr b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith b. Hishām (d. 94 A.H.), Abū-Salama b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. 'Awf (d. 104 A.H.), Sālim b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭab (d. 106 A.H.) and Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Abī-Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq (d. 108 A.H.). Az-Zuhrī also attended the lectures of those scholars who had no permanent circles in the mosque but taught privately in their homes. Among such scholars were 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr (d. 94 A.H.), 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib (d. 94 A.H.) and 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Utba b. Mas'ūd (d. 98 A.H.).⁶⁰

Az-Zuhrī did not attend the lectures of male scholars only, but he used to visit the famous female scholars of Medina and heard from them the traditions and consulted them on juristic problems. Among these scholars were

59) Nubalā', V, i, 98b.

60) Rijāl, 3-5a.

'Amra-bint-'Abd-ar-Raḥmān (d. 103/104 A.H.), the illustrious traditionist and jurisprudent (al-muḥadditha al-faqīha) and Hind-bint-al-Ḥārith al-Firāsīyya.⁶¹

Az-Zuhrī's education under the guidance of these scholars (both men and women) in mosque and private houses increased his store of knowledge, and he memorised a large number of the aḥādīth of the Prophet and the āthār of the Companions. Moreover, he collected a great deal of material regarding Qur'ānic sciences, sunna, sīra and maghāzī.⁶²

To sum up, az-Zuhrī's brilliant academic career rested in the main on the following four factors:

1. Perseverance and patience

All that az-Zuhrī achieved was due to his perseverance and patience. He worked hard during his student days. He used to learn his lessons and do his home-work till late at night. He bore with great patience the hardships which he suffered in pursuit of knowledge. He himself says, "No one was as patient in the pursuit of knowledge

61) Muṣa., xi, 195.; I. Sa'd, II, i, 134.; viii, 353.; A. Zur'a, v, 61a.; Tahdh, xii, 457.

62) See chapters 3 and 4.

as I was."⁶³ It was his love of knowledge and his perseverance which urged him to follow Ibn-al-Musayyib for three consecutive days in order to learn only one ḥadīth from him. Thus Mālik reports az-Zuhrī as saying: "I pursued Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib for three days in search of only one ḥadīth."⁶⁴

It was his usual practice to serve and wait on each scholar till he learnt all from him. For this reason, he remained attached to his blind teacher, 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh, for a very long time and served him like a domestic servant. Seeing his behaviour, Ubayd-Allāh's maid-servant thought that he was really another servant like her and not a student. Mālik reports that az-Zuhrī himself said: "I used to serve 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Utba so much that I could draw for him a bucket of water from the well (var: I could bring water for his ablution). Whenever I called at his house and he enquired who was at the door, his maid-servant used to reply 'your blear-eyed servant'."⁶⁵ The reason why she took him to be another servant of 'Ubayd-Allāh was the fact that he used

63) Hilya, iii, 366.; Dhahabī, v, 145.; Tadhk., i, 109.

64) Bidāya, ix, 345.; Hilya, iii, 362.

65) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 497a.; Aghā., ix, 140-141.;
Hilya, iii, 362.; Dhahabī, iv, 30.; Bidāya, ix,
344.; Tarājim, 71.

to serve him with utmost humility.

Az-Zuhrī was not attached to one teacher in particular. On the contrary, he used to move from one study circle to another. In this way, he attended the lectures of several scholars in one day. Thus he spent all his day acquiring knowledge from various available sources - from any person at any place. This, according to Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. 'Awf - his colleague - was the main cause of az-Zuhrī's superiority over him and other colleagues. He says: "Ibn-Shihāb surpassed us only in one thing: when we attended the lectures he was bent upon learning and used to pull his clothes to his chest (i.e. he was bold enough) to ask from the teacher anything he wanted to know."⁶⁶

Not only did az-Zuhrī study under the scholars of repute, but he unhesitatingly called on anyone - man or woman, young or old - possessing knowledge. Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd, one of az-Zuhrī's pupils, once asked his father Sa'd: "In what has az-Zuhrī excelled you?" The father replied: "He used to enter the majālis from the front and not from the back and asked questions of everyone, young and old present in the majālis. He used to go to

66) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 135.; I. 'Asākir, XIV, 497a.; Mizzi, x, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī'; Dhahabī, v, 144.

the houses of the Anṣār and elicited knowledge from old and young, men and women alike. He approached for this purpose even the noble womenfolk living behind the curtains, i.e. the most inaccessible women scholars."⁶⁷

Az-Zuhrī was in the habit of putting a series of questions to his teachers. The teachers in those days were reluctant to discuss a subject until they were asked to do so. Az-Zuhrī was aware of this prevalent practice of his time. So, in order to learn from his teachers, he made them speak by asking questions. Describing the method by which he was benefitted by the scholars of his time he says: "Knowledge is a treasure and its keys are question or questions."⁶⁸

Az-Zuhrī laid great emphasis on regular study and memorisation, for he knew that a student can preserve and make additions to his store of knowledge through memorisation and continuous study. On the other hand, if he does not revise what he has learnt, he tends to forget and lose the knowledge gained by him. He himself explains this and says: "Extinction of knowledge is due to non-memorisation."⁶⁹ In another report, given by

67) Mizzī, x, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī'; Tahdh., ix, 449.

68) Jāmi', I, i, 87, 89.

69) Nubalā', V, i, 99 (2).

al-Awzā'i - another pupil of his - he says: "Knowledge perishes by giving up memorisation."⁷⁰ Thus, every evening, when az-Zuhrī returned home from his daily lectures, he used to hasten towards revising and memorising whatever he had learnt in the day. Sometimes he employed peculiar and amusing methods for remembering his lessons. Muḥammad b. Ishāq reports that "When in the evening az-Zuhrī came home from the lectures of 'Urwa, al-A'raj or some other scholars, he used to wake up his Persian maid-servant - a stammerer - and reproduced before her the day's lectures. Knowing well that she was not following what he uttered he used to say: "'Urwa reported to me, al-A'raj reported to me, and so on and so forth.' When she got bored by his continuous repetition of such statements and said: 'By God, I do not know what you are saying,' he used to reply: 'I know that you do not follow what I am saying, but this is what I heard and what I want is to remember it.'" ⁷¹

To rehearse and revise his lessons had become one of az-Zuhrī's habits. He practised it throughout his life and retained thereby the knowledge possessed by him. Very often he spent the whole night rehearsing the ḥadīth and

70) Nubalā', V, i, 99 ; Jāmi, I, i, 108.

71) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 498a.; Dhahabī, v, 148.

pondering over its meaning. Al-Layth b. Sa'd, one of his students, reported that one night az-Zuhrī sat down learning the ḥadīth and the sitting lasted till dawn.⁷²

This constant hard work and lasting patience were jointly one of the factors responsible for az-Zuhrī's success. It helped him to attain the status of a great scholar. Advocating patience and perseverance, he said to his pupil Yūnus b. Yazīd: "O Yūnus, do not try to overcome knowledge, for it is like a chain of valleys; when you cross one of them it alone will make you tired before you attempt to cross another one. Cross it, therefore, day by day and night by night. Do not try to acquire the knowledge as a whole, for one who tries to get the whole of it loses all of it. The right way to achieve it (knowledge) is to work gradually - day by day and night by night. i.e. through perseverance."⁷³

2. Strong memory

A powerful retentive memory was a natural gift given by God to az-Zuhrī which he carefully preserved and fully developed. That az-Zuhrī possessed a retentive memory had become evident in his childhood days when he memorised

72) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 501a.; Bidāya, ix, 344.

73) Jāmi', I, i, 104.; Hilya, iii, 362.; Ṣifa, ii, 78.;
Dhahabī, v, 145.

the Qur'ān in a very short time, as we have seen earlier. Regarding his power of memorisation reports abound. Some of these reports have come directly from him, others from his colleagues and many more from his teachers and pupils who had associated themselves with him and had known him well. To take an example, Ibn-'Abd-al-Barr reports az-Zuhrī as saying: "When I pass through al-Baqī' I close my ears lest some filthy speech enter into them, for by God, nothing has ever entered my ears which I have forgotten."⁷⁴

It was due to his power of memorisation that not only did he visit and hear a large number of aḥādīth from several teachers in one day, but he was able to learn them by heart without any difficulty. Qāḍī 'Iyād, quoting az-Zuhrī in this matter, reports: "Az-Zuhrī said: 'I used to call on Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib, 'Urwa, Qāsīm, Abū-Salama, Ḥumayd, Sālim and a group of other scholars and attended their study circles by turns every day. From each of these scholars I heard fifty to one hundred ḥadīth which I memorised on returning home without mixing up one with the other.'⁷⁵ No wonder, therefore, that in later life he got annoyed with his own students when they failed to learn his lectures by heart. He used to

74) Jāmi', I, i, 69.

75) Madārik, I, i, 120.

reprimand them for their shortcoming. Giving an account of this attitude of az-Zuhrī, Mālik reports: "Once, az-Zuhrī related forty ḥadīth to us. I became doubtful about one of them and waited to hear it again from him. When he came out, I held the bridle of his she-mule and requested him to relate the said ḥadīth. He thereupon asked: 'Didn't I relate it to you?' 'Yes' I replied, and added: 'But I do not remember it fully.' Hearing this he became angry and remarked: 'Indeed you have corrupted the narration (rīwāya). Leave the bridle of my mule.' I, thereupon, left the bridle and he went away."⁷⁶

In another report, Mālik states: "Ibn-Shihāb related to me a lengthy ḥadīth. When I asked him to repeat it, he said: 'No.' Wanting to embarrass him I further asked: 'Didn't you yourself like things to be repeated to you?' He replied: 'No.' "⁷⁷

According to another report, when he was once asked: "Didn't you yourself wish that a ḥadīth should be repeated to you," he replied: "No."⁷⁸ Similarly, Mālik, in another

- 76) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 500b.; Dhahabī, v, 148.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī'.; Bidāya, ix, 342.; A. Zur'a, v, 60a.; Fāṣil, vi, 68a.
- 77) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 500.; Bukh. Ka., 221.
- 78) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 500b.; Bukh. Ka., 221.

report says: "Once, when I got suspicious about the isnād of a ḥadīth and called on him, he rebuked me saying: 'We were not like this.' "79 On many occasions, he said to his students: "I never wished that a ḥadīth be repeated to me. Neither did I get suspicious regarding any ḥadīth except one. About this tradition, I consulted my colleague. When I checked with him I found that it was exactly the same as I had memorised."80

Az-Zuhrī noticed a decline in the power of memorisation of the scholars of Medina. When he narrated one hundred aḥādīth to his students, even Mālik b. Anas, who possessed the most retentive memory, could not remember more than forty of them. This made az-Zuhrī very sad and he became disappointed. Mālik himself narrates this story and says: "After narrating one hundred ḥadīth, az-Zuhrī turned to me and asked: 'How many have you learnt by heart?' I replied: 'Forty.' Hearing this, he put his hand on his forehead and lamented in these words: 'O God, what a decline in the power of memorisation!'"81

Although az-Zuhrī's powerful retentive memory was a natural gift, its preservation and development was due

79) Fāṣil, vi, 68a.

80) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 501a.; Ṣifa, ii, 78.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī'; Hilya, iii, 363.; Tadhk., i, 111.

81) Dhahabī, v, 148.

to his personal effort and individual care. Az-Zuhrī believed that raisin and honey improve the power of memorisation. He was, therefore, very fond of these things. On the other hand, he disliked eating sour apples and vinegar for they, in his opinion, caused forgetfulness. Al-Layth reports: "Az-Zuhrī was averse to apples. He did not eat them and used to say: 'It makes one forget.' (But) he drank honey and said: 'It helps in memorisation.'" ⁸² In another report, Muḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh al-Laythī says: "I heard Ibn-Shihāb saying: 'Since the time I became careful about my memory, I have never eaten apples and have not taken anything containing vinegar.'" ⁸³ Az-Zuhrī advised others as well to eat raisins and drink honey if they wished to preserve aḥādīth in their memory. Ismā'īl al-Makkī reports him as saying: "One who wants to memorise ḥadīth should eat raisins." ⁸⁴

- 82) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 499b.; Damīrī, ii, 237.; Tarājim, 68.
- 83) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 499b.; Perhaps az-Zuhrī avoided eating apples because of a ḥadīth saying: "What causes forgetfulness is eating sour apples." This ḥadīth, the authenticity of which I have not verified, has been quoted by Jāḥiẓ in his Ḥayawān, v, 269. To me, it appears that az-Zuhrī disliked eating sour apples and not apples as such.
- 84) Tadhk, i, 112.; Dhahabī, v, 145.

In another report az-Zuhrī said: "One who intends to memorise ḥadīth should drink honey."⁸⁵

3. Writing

Az-Zuhrī employed writing a great deal and excelled his colleagues in this respect. He used to commit to writing everything that he heard from his teachers. So he wrote the Prophet's aḥādīth, the āthār of the Companions, and many other things. His colleagues believed that the reason for his success and superiority over them was his free use of writing. To take an example: Ma'mar reported Ṣālih b. Kaysān as saying: "Az-Zuhrī and I got together intending to acquire knowledge. We decided to write down the sunan. After writing down all that came from the Prophet, az-Zuhrī suggested that we should also write down what had come from the Companions, for it too was sunna. I said: 'It is not sunna.' He thereupon wrote and I did not write. Eventually, he succeeded and I failed."⁸⁶

85) I wonder whether people of az-Zuhrī's time generally believed that raisins and honey helped in memorisation or whether it was az-Zuhrī's own personal experience which made him feel so. We do, however, find the description of honey in the Qur'ān as a 'cure for people'. (Qur'ān, 16:69). Perhaps az-Zuhrī, on the basis of this verse, considered honey as an antidote for forgetfulness which could increase the power of memorisation.

86) Muṣa., ii, 258-259.; I. Sa'd, II, ii, 135.; A. Zur'a, v, 60b.; Taqyīd, 106-107.

Similarly, Abū-z-Zinād reports: "We wrote nothing but sunna while az-Zuhrī used to write everything. Later, when we needed him (i.e. his guidance) we discovered that he was the most learned man."⁸⁷ In another report Abū-z-Zinād said: "We used to write only ḥalāl (what is allowed) and ḥarām (what is forbidden) but az-Zuhrī used to write down everything that he heard. Later, when we had to consult him I found that he was the best scholar."⁸⁸

As az-Zuhrī was very particular in committing to writing all that he heard from his teachers, he carried with him various tools of writing when he moved from one study circle to another. This sometimes made him a laughing stock among his colleagues. The reason for this is not far to seek. We know that he was short in height and thin in structure, and that he had bleary eyes and a thin beard.⁸⁹ In addition, on account of his poverty, he used to be shabbily dressed. When his colleagues saw such a person carrying wooden tablets, bundles of sheets (ṣuḥuf) and other writing materials they could not help laughing at him. To this effect, we find a report in which 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Abī-z-Zinād quotes his father as saying: "I

87) Jāḥ., Bay., ii, 230.

88) Jāmi', I, i, 73.; I. 'Asākir, XIV, 497.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī'.

89) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 496a.; Bidāya, ix, 341.

used to move with Ibn-Shihāb who carried tablets and sheets to write down ḥadīth during lectures. For this we used to laugh at him."⁹⁰ We may forgive them for this: for they themselves admitted that they recognised that az-Zuhrī's greatness and superiority in scholarship were due, in part, to the tablets, the sheets and other things carried by him.

Due to his enthusiastic devotion for writing down all that he heard from his teachers, on ḥadīth, sunna and other related matters, it became possible for az-Zuhrī to form many collections of written material, which formed an important part of his famous library. There is no doubt that he was, throughout, resorting to these writings to verify and confirm his memory, and for studying with deeper concentration and reflection.

It appears to me that these collections helped him to a great extent when he was called upon by his friend the caliph 'Umar-ibn-'Abd-al-'Azīz (99-101 A.H.) to codify as-sunan when he attained fame as a traditionist.⁹¹

90) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 497.; Tarājim, 67.

91) Jāmi', i, 86.

4. Abundance of learned teachers

The availability of the best teachers was another main factor responsible for az-Zuhrī's astounding success. It helped a great deal in the shaping of his personality. Had he not found these competent teachers, he would not have achieved so much fame and would not have contributed so much in the field of learning and scholarship. He was fortunate enough to have spent his student days in Medina, which at that time was flooded with eminent senior scholars. He joined the study circles of these scholars, who took an interest in him. They devoted their time and energy to imparting their knowledge and encouraging him in his studies. For his part, he took full advantage of this opportunity and sincerely devoted himself to learning. He himself describes how much interest his teachers used to take in him. He says: "Once, while we were waiting for the lecture of 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, he came and asked me what we were discussing among ourselves. I told him that we were talking about ṣawm (fasting) and informed him that my colleagues and I were of the opinion that the only obligatory fast was during the month of Ramaḍān. (Hearing this) he said: 'O az-Zuhrī, what you said is not correct. The fast (aṣ-ṣawm) is of forty kinds.'" 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn - his teacher - then apprised him of all the kinds of fasting.⁹² Again, it is reported that

92) Ḥilya, iii, 141-142.

once when az-Zuhrī was sitting in the study circle of Qāsim b. Muḥammad, the latter said to him: "O boy, I find you avaricious of seeking knowledge. May I guide you to its receptacle (wi'ā'ihī)?" Az-Zuhrī replied in the affirmative. Whereupon Qāsim said: "You should go to 'Amra-bint-'Abd-ar-Raḥmān who used to live under the guardianship of 'Ā'isha." Az-Zuhrī says: "Then I came to her and found her an inexhaustible ocean (of learning)." ⁹³

To take another example: When 'Urwa recollected an important ḥadīth containing a sunna, he hastened to transmit it to az-Zuhrī. Instead of waiting till he came to his lectures at the scheduled time, 'Urwa sent for him asking him to come and listen to the said ḥadīth at once. Az-Zuhrī himself describes this event and says: "'Urwa sent for me asking me to call on him and hear a ḥadīth containing a sunna." ⁹⁴

These reports clearly show the amount of interest taken by his teachers in imparting knowledge to az-Zuhrī who, for his part, paid full respect to them during conversation, while asking questions and in all other dealings with them. We have already seen how politely he asked questions of Sa'id b. al-Musayyib and how

93) Tadhk., i, 122.; Dhahabī, v, 145.

94) A. Zur'a, v, 61a.

he respected him. We have also noticed that he served his blind teacher, 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh, with such humility that his maid-servant suspected him of being a servant. This, in az-Zuhrī's opinion, was not a disgraceful thing. Far from feeling ashamed, he felt pride in serving his teachers willingly and happily. Referring to the respect which he showed to his teacher, 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr, he said: "When I called at 'Urwa's residence, I remained sitting at the door without entering into the house. Had I wished, I could have entered the house, but I refrained from doing so as a mark of respect for him."⁹⁵

He used to give the best titles to his teachers and showed much respect while talking to them. He never forgot the favours of his teachers. When he himself became a scholar, he recalled these favours and mentioned them (in a most respectful manner) to his own students.

After studying for about twenty years in the mosque of Medina, az-Zuhrī came out as a prospective scholar with a bright future waiting for him. He had intended to join the teaching staff of the mosque and spend the rest of his life in Medina: but his financial position did not allow his plans to materialise and he had to leave Medina for Damascus in search of a livelihood and career. He himself

95) I. 'Asakir, XIV, 496b.; Hilya, iii, 362.

says: "I sat with (attended the lectures of) Sa'id b. al-Musayyib, 'Urwa and Abū-Bakr b. 'Abd-ar-Rahmān b. al-Hārith until I finished my studies. Thereafter I left for Syria."⁹⁶

96) Dhahabī, v, 138.; Nubalā', V, i, 97a.

CHAPTER TWO

AZ-ZUHRĪ'S LIFE IN DAMASCUS AND HIS
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE Umayyads

(i) His first journey to Damascus

Az-Zuhrī's father was an important member of the Zubayrid party, who had taken part in the rebellion of Ibn-az-Zubayr (d. 73 A.H.) against the Umayyads.¹ He was hopeful of the success of the rebellion and expected that the Zubayrids after seizing power and becoming rulers of the Islamic empire would repay him for his loyalty and his support for their cause. Unfortunately, the result of the rebellion was not as he had expected. To his disappointment, the rebellion was totally crushed, the Zubayrid party was defeated and many of its members and supporters were killed by the Umayyads. Those Zubayrids who managed to survive were deprived of their fiscal rights and their names were removed from the register of stipends (dīwān al-‘aṭā’).² Az-Zuhrī's

1) See p. 8 ff.

2) When ‘Umar b. ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz became caliph (99-101 A.H.), he restored the names of the stipend-holders and gave them their monetary rights. He even compensated them for what they had suffered at the hands of his predecessors from among the Umayyad caliphs.

See I. Sa‘d, V, 255-256.

father, Muslim b. 'Ubayd-Allāh belonged to this category of people. Having lost all his hopes in the success of the rebellion whereby he could have achieved material gains, he now became jobless and destitute. He became so poor that to support himself and his family he had to depend on loans. Gradually he became overburdened with debts which he could not repay during his lifetime. That is why, when he died, he left a huge amount of unpaid loans which were to be repaid by his two sons, 'Abd-Allāh and Muḥammad, i.e. az-Zuhrī. These poor boys had not only to repay these debts on behalf of their father but had to support themselves as well.³

'Abd-Allāh, being the elder son, took charge of the house after his father's death. He looked after his family and met its expenditure with a great sense of responsibility, though he suffered great difficulty and hardship in this respect. It goes to his credit that despite the extraordinarily poor economic condition of the family he continually helped his brother az-Zuhrī in his studies. He provided financial assistance to him until he completed his studies and graduated from the

- 3) Az-Zuhrī could repay the debts of his father only after he met 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān. It was, in fact, the caliph who made the repayment at az-Zuhrī's request. See I. 'Asākir, XIV, 493a.

Medina mosque with astounding success.⁴

On completing his studies, az-Zuhrī began to look for a job to share the economic burden of his brother and shoulder thereby some of the responsibilities of the family. Due to the deteriorating economy and wide-spread unemployment he could not get a job. This poor economic condition of Medina was caused on the one hand by the neglectful attitude of the Umayyads and on the other hand by the rebellion of Ibn-al-Ash'ath (d. 85 A.H.) against the Umayyad rule in 'Irāq. In order to combat and crush this powerful rebellion which lasted from

- 4) In later life when az-Zuhrī's financial condition was improved he repaid his brother, 'Abd-Allāh, for his earlier economic help and his encouragement to complete his studies, by keeping his nephew, Muḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh (d. 152 A.H.), the only son of his brother, under his guardianship and looking after him and getting him educated in Damascus. Thereafter, when Muḥammad grew up he married him to his only daughter, Umm-al-Ḥajjāj. See Mizzī, ix, under the rubric 'Muḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh az-Zuhrī'.

81 A.H. to 83 A.H.⁵ the Umayyads used all the human and economic resources available to them. As a result, the prices of commodities rose high and the cost of living increased. Life in Medina and other Islamic cities became unbearable. The people of Medina, especially the poorer class of society, suffered greatly. They decided, therefore, to leave Medina for Damascus in search of jobs and better prospects.

Az-Zuhrī, who belonged to the poor class of the community, finding his family and himself on the verge of dying of hunger decided to migrate. He took leave of

- 5) The aim of the rebellion of 'Abd-ar-Rahmān b. al-Ash'ath was to save 'Irāq in particular and the Islāmic world in general from the atrocities of the Umayyads and the cruelties of the governor of 'Irāq, the dictator, Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf (d. 95 A.H.). Among those who joined this rebellion were the majority of the 'Irāqī scholars. On account of the participation of the scholars ('ulamā'), it is also known as 'the rebellion of the Qurrā'. The uprising came near success when certain events took place which caused it to fail. As a result, a large number of eminent 'Irāqī scholars were killed. See I. Khay., i, 362 ff.; Ṭab., vi, 334 ff.; Murūj, iii, 138 ff.; Akhbār, 316 ff.

his mother and brother, bade adieu to his family and set off with the caravan leaving for Damascus. He reached there in 82 A.H.⁶ Seeing it for the first time in his life, he was bewildered by the beauty of the city of

- 6) Az-Zuhrī reports: "The people of Medina during 'Abd-al-Malik's time became destitute. I, on my part, who knew the state of affairs of my family alone, thought that what I suffered was not suffered by others. I, therefore, began to think of some relative or friend who might help me in my adversity, but I found no such helper. Thereupon I consoled myself with the thought that sustenance is in the hands of Allāh alone. With this belief, I left the town and reached Damascus." I. 'Asākir, XIV, 492a.

He further states: "I came to Damascus in the time of the rebellion of Ibn-al-Ash'ath - at a time when 'Abd-al-Malik was busy tackling this problem."

That az-Zuhrī reached Damascus in 82 A.H. is confirmed by the statement of al-Layth b. Sa'd who says:

"Ibn-Shihāb came to 'Abd-al-Malik in 82 A.H." The report that az-Zuhrī arrived in Damascus in the reign of Marwān b. al-Ḥakam (64-65 A.H.) is said to be unauthentic, as claimed by Ibn-'Asākir, Dhahabī and others. See Bukh. Ṣa, 93.; I. 'Asākir, XIV, 491b, 493b, 494a.; Nubalā', V, i, 95.; Dhahabī, v, 147.

Damascus and was astonished to find a city several times larger than Medina. Looking at the busy and crowded shopping centres and the hustle and bustle of the Umayyad capital, he was terrified and felt nervous. Nevertheless, he was bold enough to look for some place of refuge in this big city. After a long search he discovered an inexpensive hotel near the Great Mosque (al-masjid al-kabīr), where he spent the night relaxing after the long arduous journey.

Next day, long before dawn, he headed towards the Damascus mosque to offer the congregational morning prayer. He did not know that he was in fact moving towards good luck, prosperous life and a bright future which were waiting to receive him there. He was unaware of the fact that soon after entering the gate of the mosque, he would, by his good fortune, meet the caliph 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān (65-86 A.H.) and be introduced to his vizier and scholar, Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb (d. 86 A.H.)⁷ He did not know that his own, as well as his family's financial problems, would soon be solved. He was yet unaware that his learning (which was so dear to his heart and for which he had spent the best years of his childhood and youth) would soon bring him respect and honour, fame and popularity, wealth and prosperity.

7) I. Sa'd, V, 131.; VII, ii, 157.; Tahdh., viii, 346-347.

(ii) At the court of 'Abd-al-Malik

Az-Zuhrī himself describes what happened to him when he entered the Damascus mosque and how he developed his relationship with the Umayyads and began thereby his new life. He says: "I entered the Damascus mosque in the morning and joined the largest study circle (ḥalqa) near the big closet (al-maqṣūra al-‘aẓīma).⁸ The moment I took my seat there someone asked my pedigree. I told him that I belonged to the Qurayshites of Medina. Thereupon he asked me if I knew the law regarding ummahāt al-awlād.⁹ In reply, I said 'Yes' and related to him a tradition concerning this matter from 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb which I had heard from Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib. Thereafter

- 8) The 'big closet' (al-maqṣūra al-‘aẓīma) was a special closet in the mosque for the prayer of the caliphs. It was first built by Mu'āwīya b. Abī-Sufyān (41 - 60 A.H.) for the security of the caliph's life. The need for such a closet was felt when in 40 A.H. the Khārijites attempted to kill him. See Ṭab., v, 143 - 144, 149.
- 9) 'ummahāt al-awlād', the plural of 'umm al-walad' denotes the concubine who gives birth to a child of her master. The law regarding this concubine is that she cannot be sold. But when her master dies she automatically becomes free. See Bayhaqī, x, 342.

the questioner said, 'This is the study circle of Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb, who is expected shortly. The reason why we asked you this question is that the Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Abd-al-Malik has enquired of Qabīṣa and us about the rule regarding ummahāt al-awlād and we do not know it. The caliph is much concerned about this matter because he has to decide a case regarding umm al-walad. The Amīr al-Mu'minīn does remember that during his stay in Medina he heard a ḥadīth (about this matter) from Sa'id b. al-Musayyib but he has forgotten its contents." Az-Zuhrī says: "While we were discussing these matters a handsome man of an impressive personality came to the study circle (ḥalqa) and took his seat in the centre. He was Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb, to whom they introduced me; saying that I knew the said ḥadīth. Thereupon he asked my name and pedigree and enquired about Sa'id b. al-Musayyib and his colleagues from among the scholars of Medina. I told him everything that he asked and related to him the ḥadīth regarding ummahāt al-awlād. Hearing this, he said: 'This is what Amīr al-Mu'minīn wants. I shall take you to him after the prayer so that you can relate it to him yourself.' Az-Zuhrī continues, "Then we offered our morning prayer and I accompanied Qabīṣa to the caliph's residence. Qabīṣa entered the palace while I waited at the gate for quite a while. When the sun rose and the caliph wanted to grant interviews to the public, he asked the chamberlain (ḥājib) to call the people one by one. Soon someone called out: 'Where is that Medinan



Qurashī?' I quickly said that the person being called was me and entered into the court of amīr al-mu'minīn. There was no one with the caliph except Qabīṣa. A copy of the Qur'ān was placed before the caliph. He ordered it to be taken away and turned towards me. I greeted him with the formula 'May peace be upon you O amīr al-mu'minīn.' He asked me who I was, whereupon I replied: 'My name is Muḥammad b. Muslim b. 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Shihāb.' No sooner did he hear my reply than he became furious and said: 'Ah, you belong to the group of people which supported the uprising and took part in the civil war, and your father actively participated in the rebellion against us.' "

Az-Zuhrī adds: "Since my father and uncle were actually on the side of Ibn-az-Zubayr, I appealed to the caliph: 'O amīr al-mu'minīn, forgive us for what happened in the past and pardon us with the words 'Have no fear this day' as was done by a righteous servant (of God).' The caliph granted my request and said: 'Have no fear this day! May Allāh forgive you....' "10

Before asking about the tradition regarding ummahāt al-awlād, the caliph 'Abd-al-Malik put several questions to

10) The righteous servant (of God) refers to the Prophet Joseph. See Qur'ān, XII, 92 and preceeding verses.

az-Zuhrī to test his ability and to assess his academic standard. Az-Zuhrī gave correct answers to all of his questions except two. In answering these two questions he made only minor mistakes which were corrected by 'Abd-al-Malik.¹¹ It appears that these mistakes were due to nervousness which was caused on account of his meeting the caliph for the first time.

Having been satisfied with az-Zuhrī's sound knowledge, the caliph asked him to relate the ḥadīth regarding ummahāt al-awlād. Az-Zuhrī himself reports: "Then he asked me what information I possessed regarding ummahāt al-awlād. I narrated the ḥadīth about this issue and told him that it had been related to me by Sa'id b. al-Musayyib. 'Abd-al-Malik then asked about Sa'id b. al-Musayyib. I apprised him of his welfare. Thereafter he turned towards Qabīṣa and asked him to circulate the ḥadīth throughout the empire.

I, on my part, considered myself fortunate to be with the caliph alone and thought it a great privilege that the caliph had granted me a personal interview when there was no one with him except Qabīṣa. Thinking that I would perhaps never find such a golden opportunity in future I requested the caliph to help me financially. I told him

11) I. 'Asākir, XIV, 491b.; Dhahabī, v, 147.

that I was destitute and heavily in debt and that my name had been struck from the register of stipends (dīwān). The caliph did not allow me to speak further and asked me to leave. I, therefore, came out in a very dejected mood and did not expect to receive financial assistance from him though I was really destitute and possessed nothing to live on. I sat down waiting for Qabīṣa. When he came out, he rushed towards me and said: 'Why did you behave in such a manner and ask him something without consulting me beforehand?' I replied: 'I did so because I thought that I would not see him again.' Qabīṣa then asked me to follow him to his house. I, therefore, accompanied him and waited at his door. Soon after entering the house, he sent me a messenger with a letter, saying: 'I grant you one hundred dīnārs in cash, one mule as your conveyance, one servant to serve you and ten articles of clothing as your garment.' After reading the letter, I asked the messenger from whom I should receive these things. He said: 'Do you not find in the letter itself the name of the person whom you are required to contact in this connection?' " Az-Zuhri says: "Then I looked into the letter, found the name of the person concerned, approached him and received the above items."

Qabīṣa not only favoured az-Zuhrī with the above gifts but did him another favour by arranging for him a second meeting with the caliph and taking him personally to court. In this meeting, the caliph became highly

impressed by az-Zuhrī's intelligence and knowledge and not only granted to him everything that he requested, but received him in the most befitting and honourable manner. It is clear that whatever az-Zuhrī gained from 'Abd-al-Malik in later life was mainly due to Qabīṣa, for it was he who had introduced him to the caliph.

Continuing his story about his meeting with 'Abd-al-Malik az-Zuhri says: "Next morning, I went to my benefactor Qabīṣa on the mule he had given me. There he asked me to go and wait for him at the gate of amīr al-mu'minīn until he came and arranged my meeting with the caliph. I thereupon did as directed. When Qabīṣa came he took me to the caliph. I greeted him and he asked me to take my seat. When I sat down, he opened the discussion by asking about the genealogy of my tribe, the Quraysh. I wished he would stop asking those questions lest I made any mistake, for I knew that he possessed more knowledge on that subject than I myself did.¹² At last he changed the topic and said, 'I have sanctioned grants and approved stipends for your family.' Saying this, he turned towards Qabīṣa and asked him to get it recorded in the register of stipends (dīwān). Thereafter he asked me: 'In which register do

12) Tahdh., vi, 423.

you want your name to be recorded - in the register of Damascus maintained by the amīr al-mu'minīn here, or in the register of your own city, Medina?' I replied, 'O amīr al-mu'minīn, I am associated with you here. Keep therefore, my dīwan with you and your family.' Thereupon he included me among his close companions and said, 'The debts of your father will be repaid by Allāh (through me).' Then he favoured me with gifts and rewards and ordered that a house be bought for me in Medina. Having shown so much magnanimity he advised me thus: 'Go and continue your studies without any distraction. I can very well see that you possess a powerful memory and remarkable intelligence.' "

This second meeting with the caliph 'Abd-al-Malik assured a bright future for az-Zuhrī. The caliph, by relieving az-Zuhrī of all worries concerning his own and his family's financial needs, provided him full opportunity to concentrate on his studies. He brought him nearer by including him among his courtiers. His well-wisher Qabīṣa advised him to remain in Damascus and to associate himself with the companions of 'Abd-al-Malik. Az-Zuhrī agreed to his friend's suggestion and made Damascus his second home where he spent all the remaining years of his life. With the passage of time, his relationship with 'Abd-al-Malik became stronger and they came closer to each other. The caliph's benevolence and generosity encouraged az-Zuhrī to make frequent visits to the court. The caliph, during

these visits, became much impressed by az-Zuhrī's knowledge and good behaviour and liked his company. Whenever az-Zuhrī paid a visit to court, the caliph put various questions before him and held discussions on different topics. Perhaps, he wanted in this way to refresh his memory about those things he had learned during his youth and to recall the aḥādīth he had heard while he was a student in the Medina mosque.¹³ During these discussions, 'Abd-al-Malik noticed that although az-Zuhrī narrated the aḥādīth from the Qurayshite scholars he did not report from such Medinan scholars who were known to him (the caliph). He, therefore, advised him to call on the scholars of Medina and to hear the traditions from the Anṣarite scholars as well. Acting upon his advice, az-Zuhrī attended the lectures of these scholars and was much benefitted by them. He himself states: "I associated myself with the companions of the caliph and frequently visited his court. Whenever I called on him he asked from whom I had heard the traditions. When, in reply, I mentioned the names of the Qurayshite scholars only, he asked: 'Why do you not report from the Anṣarite scholars? Why do you not narrate from Khārija b. Zayd,

13) I. Sa'd, V, 174. No wonder, therefore, that 'Abd-al-Malik was included among the eminent jurists of Medina. See I. Hanb. 'Ilal, i, 375, 408.

the son of their leader?¹⁴ Why do you not report from 'Abd-ar-Rahmān b. Yazīd b. Jāriya?¹⁵ Do call on them, for you will certainly find much knowledge with them.' " Az-Zuhrī says: "Then I came to Medina, attended their lectures and gained much knowledge ('ilman kathīra)."¹⁶

Apart from meeting the caliph in his court at Damascus, az-Zuhrī often accompanied him during his visits to some of his subject territories. These visits helped him to gain experience and keep him informed about current affairs. In one of 'Abd-al-Malik's visits to Palestine az-Zuhrī, who was accompanying him, heard the caliph's sermon delivered on the occasion of 'Īd al-Fiṭr at Īliyā'. The caliph in this speech mentioned the main factors which helped in the progress and development of the state. He laid much stress on the importance of knowledge and appealed to the people to pay due attention to its preservation and dissemination. Az-Zuhrī was so

14) See I. Sa'd, V, 193.; Tahdh., iii, 75.

15) See Tahdh., vi, 298-299.

16) I have brought together reports about az-Zuhrī's journey to Damascus and his meeting with 'Abd-al-Malik etc. from various sources. See A. Zur'a, v, 59-60.; I. 'Asākir, XIV, 491-499.; Nubalā', V, i, 96-97.; Dhahabī, v, 139 ff.; Hilya, iii, 367-368.

impressed by the caliph's speech that he memorised it verbatim. Describing the contents of this sermon, az-Zuhrī says: "I heard 'Abd-al-Malik saying in a speech at ʿĪliyā': "Knowledge will soon disappear. Thus whosoever possesses some of it should make it known to others or (according to another version) should disseminate it."¹⁷ Not only did az-Zuhrī accompany the caliph during his visits to various provinces to look into the affairs of its people but he also accompanied him in some of the battles against the Romans. On such occasions he used to dress himself in the uniform of a soldier and participate in the fight along with them.¹⁸

Although az-Zuhrī, with a view to remain with the caliph and Qabīṣa, lived in Damascus from 82 A.H., he did not forget his people in Medina. He used to pay visits to them whenever he desired. His visits were not only to see his relatives but also to meet his teachers who were gathered there. He used to consult them on various matters and acquaint himself with their latest views and opinions. He also visited Mecca during the Ḥajj season to perform the Ḥajj (pilgrimage) and to meet scholars of different

17) A. Zur'a, v, 60.; Jāmī', i, 123.

18) Nubalā', V, i, 96b.; I. 'Asakir, XIV, 494a.; Tadhk., i, 109 where it is reported that az-Zuhrī was a great soldier.

Islāmic countries who had come to Mecca to perform the
Hajj.¹⁹

Whenever az-Zuhrī returned from his journeys to Medina or Mecca, 'Abd-al-Malik asked him to give an account of his travels and to describe the experiences he gained during his visits. He also enquired about the educational activities of various Islāmic cities and about their scholars. Thus Walīd b. Muḥammad al-Muwaqqarī reports az-Zuhrī as saying: "I came to 'Abd-al-Malik who asked me: 'Where do you come from, O az-Zuhrī?' 'From Mecca' I replied. He further asked: 'Who is the greatest scholar of that city?' "'Aṭā' b. Abī-Rabāḥ' I answered. Then he enquired: 'Is he from among the 'Arabs or from the mawālī?' 'From among the mawālī' I replied. Thereafter he asked: 'In what does he excel?' 'In piety and scholarship' I replied. Whereupon he remarked: 'Verily, only the righteous and men of learning deserve to be the leader.' " Then he asked him to name the leading scholars in the respective cities of the Muslim world at that time. When az-Zuhrī mentioned their names, the caliph found out that all those scholars were non-'Arabs (mawālī). This made 'Abd-al-Malik disappointed, for he thought that the 'Arab leadership was in danger. But

19) Az-Zuhrī says: "My travels from Ḥijāz to Syria and from Syria to Ḥijāz extended over forty-five years....."
A. Zur'a, v, 60.

soon afterwards, when az-Zuhrī told him that the leading scholar of Kufa was an 'Arab, 'Abd-al-Malik's dejection disappeared and he became cheerful. He, therefore, said: "O az-Zuhrī, you have now relieved me. So far, I was thinking that the mawālī would lead the 'Arabs so much that they would deliver sermons from the pulpit while the 'Arabs would become their audiences." Az-Zuhrī says that on this he commented: "O amīr al-mu'minīn, the law of Allāh and His religion is whoever holds fast to the teachings of Islām, he becomes the master and whoever ignores them becomes the loser."²⁰

(iii) In the company of al-Walīd and Sulaymān, the sons of 'Abd-al-Malik

In addition to his association with 'Abd-al-Malik, az-Zuhrī soon introduced himself to two future caliphs of the Umayyad dynasty. Moreover, he established contacts with other members of the ruling family and was on friendly terms with the sons of 'Abd-al-Malik and other princes. Their friendship grew with the passage of time. Some of these princes like al-Walīd, Sulaymān, Yazīd and Hishām later became caliphs. They not only retained their friendship with this Qurayshite Medinan scholar but drew him closer to them. Recognizing his scholarship,

20) Ma'rifa, 198-199.; 'Ulūm, 360-362.

they paid him due respect, favoured him with gifts and presents, granted him landed properties,²¹ and appointed him to high positions.²²

The caliphs and princes had full confidence in az-Zuhrī's sincerity, listened to his opinions, trusted him in religious and legal matters, accepted his advice and considered him their teacher and favourite scholar. He was held in high esteem not only in the caliph's place but in the whole city of Damascus.

It is to be noted, however, that despite his close association with the Umayyad rulers az-Zuhrī retained his old friendship with their enemies, the Hāshimites and the Zubayrids. In this way, he remained impartial in the dispute between the two parties. Sources mention nothing which could show that he criticised one or the other. Thus he remained faithful to his teachers 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (d. 94 A.H.), 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr (d. 94 A.H.) and their sons and families,²³ and was particularly loyal to his great teacher Sa'id b. al-Musayyib (d. 94 A.H.) who hated

21) Masālik, 34.

22) A. Zur'a, i, 12a.

23) I. Sa'd, V, 159.; Mizzī, VII, under the rubric
'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn.'; Tahdh., i, 321.

the Umayyads intensely.²⁴ Although Ibn-al-Musayyib was in the beginning displeased with az-Zuhrī when in his first meeting with the Umayyads he had reported a ḥadīth about ummahāt al-awlād on his authority, yet later on he pardoned him and did not disapprove of his association with the Umayyads. However, he asked him not to mention his name before ‘Abd-al-Malik while reporting any tradition on his authority.²⁵ It shows that the pious

24) I. Sa‘d, V, 95-100.; Dhahabī, iv, 6.; I. Khall, i, 259.

25) When az-Zuhrī narrated the ḥadīth about ummahāt al-awlād before ‘Abd-al-Malik and said that he had heard it from Ibn-al-Musayyib, ‘Abd-al-Malik wanted to confirm az-Zuhrī's statement. He, therefore, wrote to the governor (al-wālī) of Medina asking him to contact Ibn-al-Musayyib and enquire about the said ḥadīth. In pursuance of this order, the governor met Ibn-al-Musayyib who confirmed the authenticity of the aḥādīth and proved thereby the veracity of az-Zuhrī in reporting it. The governor thereupon apprised ‘Abd-al-Malik of the fact. Ibn-al-Musayyib became annoyed with his student az-Zuhrī, for it was due to him that he had to meet the governor of Medina - a thing which he never liked. Az-Zuhrī, therefore, apologised to his teacher for this action and the latter forgave him and was pleased with him again. See A. Zur‘a, v, 60a.; I. ‘Asākir, XIV, 492b.

Medinan scholars from among az-Zuhrī's teachers and others did not disapprove of his association with the Umayyads.²⁶ This was due to their belief that az-Zuhrī did not belong to the category of scholars who could sacrifice their principles and act against their conscience in order to achieve wordly power or monetary gains. Since these scholars did not disapprove of his friendship with the ruling authorities and had full faith in him, az-Zuhrī remained attached to the Umayyads till his death. His association with the Umayyads proved helpful in the promotion of Islāmic sciences. It helped him serve religion and society at large, as we shall see in the following pages.

During the reign of al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik (86-96 A.H.) az-Zuhrī was recognized as a learned scholar, a reputed narrator of ḥadīth and sīra, and an illustrious jurisprudent who was well versed in the sunna of the Prophet and the juridical views of the Companions and older Successors. After the death of Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb (d. 86 A.H.), he became the court scholar and succeeded him as master of his study circle in the Damascus mosque,

- 26) Some of these scholars themselves were on friendly terms with the Umayyads and were willing to accept important posts in their regime. See I. Sa'd, V, 115, 154.; Tab., v, 232.; Nasab, 304.; Tahdh., iii, 75.

inheriting Qabīṣa's disciples. In this way he shouldered the responsibility of spreading knowledge and of rectifying the misinterpretation of several religious issues given by the caliphs and the princes. He was bold enough to point out the errors of the Umayyad rulers and advise them to adopt the right path. To take an example; once, when he heard al-Walīd criticising 'Ā'isha (d. 58 A.H.) the Prophet's wife, he did not hesitate to point out his mistake and to advise him in an intelligent and respectful manner. Az-Zuhrī reports: "(Once), when in my presence al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik made a defamatory statement about 'Ā'isha, I said to him: 'O amīr al-mu'minin, may I report to you a ḥadīth on the authority of a person from Syria who narrates the traditions full of wisdom?' 'Who is he?' he asked. I replied that he was Abū-Muslim al-Khawlānī, and added that when he had heard the Syrians criticising 'Ā'isha, he said to them: 'You and your Mother - the Mother of all Muslims - 'Ā'isha, are like two eyes in a head. When either of these aches, the whole body feels its pain. Each of them tries to requite the other with what is best.' In other words, just as I do not want anyone of you to defame an other, so do I wish that none of you should make defamatory statements about 'Ā'isha."

Hearing this report from az-Zuhrī, al-Walīd kept quiet and refrained from slandering 'Ā'isha.²⁷

27) Muṣa., xi, 433.

There were some courtiers and Umayyad supporters who in their own self interest fabricated aḥādīth justifying the Umayyad rule and extolling the merits of its caliphs. Some of these traditions placed the caliphs on such a high pedestal that they were considered above the law and not answerable for their unjust or evil actions. In other words, they bore no responsibility whatsoever. A ḥadīth, for instance, ran as follows: "One who remains a caliph for (at least) three days does not enter hell" (or, according to another version, "Hell becomes unlawful for him)."²⁸ Another ḥadīth reads: "The caliphs on the Day of Judgement will not be considered accountable and will not be punished."²⁹ A third ḥadīth runs: "Verily, when Allāh makes his servant ruler and entrusts him with the responsibility of looking after his people, He records his good actions (al-ḥasanāt) only and disregards his evil deeds (as-sayyi'āt)."³⁰ According to another ḥadīth the Prophet was reported to have said: "Follow the rulers (umarā'). If they do good, its reward will go to you. But if they do wrong, they themselves will be held responsible and you will not be answerable for their actions."³¹

28) Tab., vii, 213.

29) Damīri, i, 89.

30) 'Iqd, i, 50.

31) When ash-Sha'bī (d. 104 A.H.) heard a person narrating this tradition in the Damascus mosque he told him that he was a liar. See Tadhk., i, 83.

When az-Zuhrī learned of these fabricated traditions he became very worried. Realizing the hazardous and evil consequences of these aḥādīth, he categorically rejected them and gave logical and convincing proofs of their unreliability. In this way, he prevented the caliphs from being misled by the fabricated traditions and stopped them from misusing their power and rights and privileges on the basis of these aḥādīth. At the same time he apprised them of the limitations of their power and their responsibilities towards their subjects. The following dialogue between az-Zuhrī and al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik shows the former's boldness with regard to religious matters. Az-Zuhrī reports: "(Once when) I entered the court of al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik he asked: 'What is your opinion regarding the tradition narrated by the Syrians?' 'Which ḥadīth O amīr al-mu'minīn?' I asked. He said: 'They report that when Allāh makes His servant a ruler He records his good actions (al-ḥasanāt) and takes no notice of his evil deeds (as-sayyi'āt).' 'It is unauthentic O amīr al-mu'minīn,' I replied, and added 'Tell me, who is more respectful in the eyes of Allāh: A Prophet who is also a caliph or a caliph who is not a prophet?' He said: 'The caliph who is also a prophet is certainly more respectful to Allāh.' Thereupon I said: 'Verily, Allāh says to his prophet David: 'O David! Lo! We have set thee as a viceroy in the earth; therefore judge aright between mankind, and follow not desire that it beguile thee from the way of Allāh. Lo! those who wander from the way

of Allāh have an awful doom, forasmuch as they forgot the Day of Reckoning.'³² O amīr al-mu'minīn! this is Allāh's warning to a prophet who was also a caliph. So what do you think of a caliph who is not a prophet! Hearing this he remarked: 'People misguide us in our religion'."³³

Despite his outspokenness in religious matters, az-Zuhrī's relationship with the Umayyads continually grew and he won the confidence of the ruling family and the people; and he was greatly respected by the scholars of the time because of his sincerity and scholarship. But his relationship with the caliphs made some people think that he was a tool in the hands of the Umayyads who fabricated traditions in their favour. It appears that these grave charges were levelled against him through lack of information regarding az-Zuhrī and without scrutinising the reports on this matter.³⁴

Anyone who carefully reads about az-Zuhrī's association with the Umayyads will certainly realise that it proved beneficial to the Muslim community. He will see that it was through this association that az-Zuhrī was able to rectify some of the mistakes of the caliphs. For instance,

32) Qur'ān, xxxviii, 26.

33) 'Iqd, i, 50.

34) See Goldziher, 44-48.

had he not been attached to the court of al-Walīd, it would not have been possible for him to have given valuable advice to him when he heard him slandering 'Ā'isha. Similarly, without his association with the court, the ruling family would not have been apprised of the falseness of those traditions which had found currency in court circles. These ahādīth were secretly fabricated and disseminated in and outside the palace to mislead the caliphs and the princes. It was only az-Zuhrī who informed them of their inauthenticity.

Az-Zuhrī had very good relations with al-Walīd. This relationship was not limited to the sphere of religion and literature alone, but developed into a personal relationship between the two. Thus, when az-Zuhrī intended to marry his beloved cousin - the daughter of his uncle Mālik b. Shihāb - he consulted al-Walīd and took his advice in this matter. Al-Walīd not only gave his advice, but arranged the marriage ceremony in his palace and himself attended it.³⁵

It is interesting to note that az-Zuhrī's love affair with his cousin, which resulted in their marriage, was quite well-known and had become a favourite topic for storytellers (quṣṣāṣ) and story writers. This interesting story found a prominent place among the famous love stories

35) Bukh. Ṣa, 104.

of the 'Arabs for a very long time.³⁶ Unfortunately, the story has not survived and none of its contents has come down to us. The only information available to us now is az-Zuhrī's wife's well-known jealousy of her husband's books. These books kept az-Zuhrī so occupied that he found no time to attend to his wife. No wonder, therefore, that once when she saw him sitting as usual in his room

- 36) Ibn-an-Nadīm includes the story of az-Zuhrī's affair with his cousin among the most famous love stories mentioned in his Fihrist, 307, under the title "The Book of az-Zuhrī and his cousin when they went to Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik." In my opinion, the title should be read: "The Book of az-Zuhrī and his cousin when they went to al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik." In other words, the name of the caliph as Hishām, his brother, is wrong. It should instead be read as al-Walīd as reported by al-Bukhārī. He reports: "Az-Zuhrī said: 'I came to al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik to take his counsel regarding my marriage with my cousin, the daughter of Mālik b. Shihāb. After taking our meals together we dispersed.....' "
- Bukh. Ṣa, 104.

engrossed with his books, she said to him: "By Allāh, verily these books are harder for me to bear than three co-wives."³⁷

During the reign of Sulaymān b. 'Abd-al-Malik (96-99 A.H.) who succeeded his brother al-Walīd, az-Zuhrī attained greater popularity and came closer to the caliph. He was so close to him that sometimes he intervened in affairs of state. Thus he, along with Sulaymān's vizier, the Palestinian scholar Rajā' b. Ḥaywa (d. 112 A.H.) and his friend 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-Azīz (99-101 A.H.), the cousin and brother-in-law of the caliph,³⁸ advised the caliph Sulaymān in many political issues and gave counsel regarding several internal policies of the state. Influenced by the opinions of these advisers, Sulaymān adopted a policy which was different from that of his father, 'Abd-al-Malik, and his brother al-Walīd. Thus, with the help of these advisers, who were close friends, possessed identical views and had a sincere desire to serve the religion and the community, Sulaymān brought several reforms to the country.³⁹ On the advice of Rajā' and az-Zuhrī, Sulaymān appointed 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz as his heir, preferring him over his brothers

37) I. Khall., iii, 317.; Shadharāt, i, 162.;

Abū-l-Fidā', i, 204.; See Imti'az, 403, no.5.

38) A. Zur'a, i, 10a, 11; ii, 22a; S. 'Umar, 143-144.

39) Ṭab., vi, 546.; Dhahabī, iv, 8.; Bidāya, ix, 178-179.

Yazīd and Hishām, the sons of 'Abd-al-Malik.⁴⁰ Without the active role and influence of Rajā' and az-Zuhrī, this important event in the history of the Umayyad dynasty and in the history of Islām would not have happened.

Sulaymān was so much impressed by the knowledge and personality of az-Zuhrī that, when he intended to pay a visit to Mecca and Medina with a view to perform the Hajj (pilgrimage) and see the holy places, he invited az-Zuhrī (along with other famous jurists of Medina) to accompany him and apprise him of the juristic rulings regarding Hajj.⁴¹

Although Sulaymān recognised the scholarship of az-Zuhrī, he once contrived to test his scholastic ability. With this in mind he arranged a dialogue between him and a Baṣrite scholar Qatāda b. Di'āma as-Sadūsī (d. 117 A.H.) on some literary topic. Az-Zuhrī proved his superiority over Qatāda and won the appreciation of Sulaymān, who complimented him with the phrase 'a buoyant jurist (faqīh

40) A. Zur'a, i, 10b, ii, 22a; S. 'Umar, 30; Tab., vi, 550-552.

41) I. Ḥazm, Iḥkām, iv, 207-208.; I'lām, ii, 365-366.; 'Iqd, iii, 110.

malīh).⁴² He was so pleased with az-Zuhrī's success that he rewarded him with fertile lands in Shaghb and Badā. These lands were full of water-springs, orchards and agricultural fields. They served as holiday resorts for az-Zuhrī, who not only spent his leisure time there but made them a halting-place. Thus, during his journeys to Syria, Ḥijāz, Palestine and Egypt, he used to take rest and make sojourn there.⁴³

(iv) Adviser to 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz

Both az-Zuhrī and 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz (99-101 A.H.) received their education in Medina and studied under the same scholars.⁴⁴ They met each other at the lectures of the poet-jurist 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh (d. 98 A.H.)

- 42) Jāh. Bay, i, 205. Naturally, az-Zuhrī's victory over Qatāda was not liked by the latter's supporters. They charged Sulaymān, therefore, of partiality and accused him of taking the side of az-Zuhrī; for he was on the one hand a Qarashī and on the other hand the favourite scholar of the Umayyads. Ibid.
- 43) Shaghb and Badā were two villages or two valleys between Ḥijāz and Syria, on the border of Ḥijāz and Palestine. I. Khall., i, 572. I. Ḥawqal, 34.
- 44) S. 'Umar, 20 ff.; I. Sa'd, v, 243 ff.; Dhahabī, iv, 164.; v, 136.; Tahdh., vii, 475.; ix, 445.

and developed their liking for each other. Gradually, they became good friends and developed a mutual understanding. When az-Zuhrī left Medina and joined ‘Abd-al-Malik and other Umayyad princes, he was received with open arms by ‘Umar b. ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz and their friendship was thus renewed.

In 87 A.H. al-Walīd appointed ‘Umar b. ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz as governor of Medina.⁴⁵ The people became happy over this appointment, for ‘Umar, who had studied under the Medinan scholars, was quite well-known to them. They had full trust in him and believed that he would prove a good jurist and an efficient administrator and look after their interests in the best possible manner. ‘Umar, on his part, did not disappoint them in their sincere expectations from him. Soon after his arrival in Medina, he formed a ten-member advisory committee of eminent scholars to help him in the discharge of his duties and to assist him in looking after the welfare of the state.⁴⁶

45) I. Sa‘d, v, 244.

46) I. Sa‘d, v, 245-246.; Tab., vi, 427-428.; Akḥbār, 326. The members of the above committee were the following: ‘Urwa, ‘Ubayd-Allāh b. ‘Abd-Allāh, Abū-Bakr b. ‘Abd-ar-Raḥmān, Abū-Bakr b. Sulaymān, Sulaymān b. Yasār, al-Qāsīm b. Muḥammad, Sālīm b. ‘Abd-Allāh b. ‘Umar, ‘Abd-Allāh b. ‘Abd-Allah b. ‘Umar, ‘Abd-Allāh b. ‘Āmir and Khārija b. Zayd. cf. I. Sa‘d, v, 245-246.; Tab., vi, 427-428.; Akḥbār, 326.

Since az-Zuhrī spent most of his time in Damascus, he was not a member of the advisory committee. Nevertheless, whenever he came to Medina he called on his friend 'Umar and attended the meetings of this committee, listening to the discussions and asking questions. Giving an account of one of the meetings he had attended, az-Zuhrī describes the order in which the members were sitting and tells us that 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr (d. 94 A.H.) was also present at the meeting.⁴⁷

It seems that the advisory committee of Medina could not successfully achieve its aims and could not function longer.⁴⁸ The reason for this was the differences of opinion among the members themselves and their individual preference for the opinion of one or the other jurist. To take an example: 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr (d. 94 A.H.) was inclined to the views of his maternal aunt 'Ā'isha (d. 58 A.H.), while Sālim b. 'Abd-Allāh (d. 106 A.H.) preferred the opinions of his father 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar (d. 74 A.H.). Despite the fact that 'Umar sometimes manoeuvred to settle the differences of opposing groups,⁴⁹

47) A. Zur'a, v, 61a.

48) The above committee helped 'Umar in supervising the extension and renovation of the Prophet's mosque in Medina. See Tab., vi, 435.

49) Tab. Taf., ii, 86.; Muṣa., ii, 568.

it had no doubt created great problems for the young prince.

'Umar was pleased with his friend az-Zuhrī and trusted him more than any member of his advisory committee. Az-Zuhrī's occasional visits to Medina provided 'Umar with good opportunity to consult him in important and wearisome problems. That 'Umar consulted him in juristic matters is evident from the following report:

"Ma'mar reports that I said to az-Zuhrī: 'Verily Hishām b. 'Urwa informed me that 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz during his governorship of Medina in al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik's reign, amputated the hand of a person who had injured someone with a sword.' He reports that az-Zuhrī laughed at this and remarked: 'Will this act serve as a precedent for future laws? The truth is that al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik had written to 'Umar asking him to cut off the hand of a person who had attacked the other with a sword, whereupon 'Umar called me and asked my opinion regarding cutting off his hand. I said to him: 'I think you should apprise al-Walīd of the correct ruling in this matter. Tell him that Ṣawfān b. al-Mu'aṭṭal, during the Prophet's lifetime, struck Ḥassān b. Thābit with the sword, but the Prophet did not cut off his hand. Similarly, such-and-such a person struck such-and-such another person with a sword during the reign of Marwān but Marwān did not cut off the offender's hand.' 'Umar quoted these cases

in his letter to al-Walīd and waited for the latter's reply. After waiting for a long time he received al-Walid's reply in which he wrote: 'So far as Ḥassān was concerned, he used to slander Ṣafwān and sang erotic verses about his mother and mentioned many other things. (Either Ma'mar forgot az-Zuhrī's last statement or intentionally avoided mentioning it due to its vileness). As regards the second case, although Marwān did not amputate the offender's hand, his son 'Abd-al-Malik did so. You should also, therefore, cut off the offender's hand.' Az-Zuhrī continues: 'Umar thereupon cut off his hand, committing thereby a sinful act for which I pray Allāh to forgive him.' "50

'Umar once asked az-Zuhrī to accompany him in the Ḥajj (pilgrimage). The latter agreed to it and went to Mecca with him.⁵¹ During their stay in Mecca, one night a renowned 'Irāqī scholar, Sa'īd b. Jubayr (d. 94 A.H.), secretly came to az-Zuhrī's house and sought refuge with him. He had fled from 'Irāq after the defeat of the

50) Muṣa, x, 161-162.; A. Zur'a, vii, 86b. Ṣafwān and Ḥassān referred to here are respectively Ṣafwān b. Mu'aṭṭal and Ḥassān b. Thābit. For the cause of Ṣafwān's striking of Ḥassān, see WM, ii, 436 ff.

51) I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 30.

rebellion of Ibn-al-Ash'ath (d. 85 A.H.) and was hiding himself in Mecca lest Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf (d. 95 A.H.), the governor of 'Irāq, arrested him for taking part in the rebellion. He was also apprehensive lest 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz should catch hold of him if he discovered that he was hiding in Mecca. Az-Zuhrī provided him shelter and asked him to have no fear of 'Umar. He himself reports: "I accompanied 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz in the Ḥajj (pilgrimage). One night, Sa'īd b. Jubayr entered my house in a frightened mood and asked if my friend, i.e. 'Umar, would arrest him if he discovered his presence there. I replied 'No' and said, 'You are quite safe with him.'⁵²

The above incident shows how, through his friendship with the Umayyads, az-Zuhrī served the community at large and looked after their rights and liberties. The incident further shows that 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz was

52) I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 30.; Bukh. Ṣa., 107.

After removing 'Umar from the governorship of Medina and Mecca, al-Walīd appointed 'Uthmān b. Ḥayyān al-Murrī as new governor of Medina and Khālīd b. 'Abd-Allāh al-Qasrī as governor of Mecca. The latter during his governorship arrested Sa'īd b. Jubayr and sent him to Ḥajjāj in 'Irāq where Ḥajjāj put him to death in 94 A.H. See Tab., vi, 487-491.

different from other Umayyad rulers, he disapproved of their policies and openly criticised the caliph al-Walīd and Ḥajjāj. That is why Ḥajjāj sent a complaint to al-Walīd against 'Umar and suggested the latter's removal from the governorship of Medina. In this complaint, Ḥajjāj accused 'Umar of letting the rebels run away from Iraq and to live freely. On Ḥajjāj's complaint, the caliph deposed 'Umar, asked him to return to Damascus and threatened him with severe punishment if he refused to comply with his order or criticised his policy.⁵³

Although we possess no information regarding az-Zuhrī's association with 'Umar after the latter's removal from office, it seems plausible that he remained in contact with him even during this period and that he occasionally visited him.

When Sulaymān ascended the throne, after the death of his brother al-Walīd, he brought 'Umar closer to him, paid him great respect and considered him the most important prince in his family.⁵⁴ As we have seen earlier, it was under the influence of Rajā' b. Ḥaywa

53) S. 'Umar, 25-26, 173.; Ṭab., vi, 481-482.

54) A. Zur'a, i, 11., Bidāya, ix, 178.

and az-Zuhrī that Sulaymān nominated 'Umar as his successor.⁵⁵ To this effect, he made a will which was

55) The different reports regarding Sulaymān's will and the circumstances which compelled the caliph to nominate 'Umar as his successor and contradictory reports about the shifting of the caliphate to 'Umar make us believe that something unusual must have happened and that some underground work was secretly done. The persons who took part in this plot were Rajā' and az-Zuhrī. The plot was eventually successful whereby 'Umar became the caliph. The main motive behind the shifting of the caliphate from the real heir to 'Umar was the interest of the community; for it was expected that the true Islāmic spirit in the society could be revived during the reign of 'Umar. For further details, see the following sources and compare their reports with my comments, on how 'Umar became caliph:

1. A. Zur'a, i, 10b; ii, 22a.
2. I. Sa'd, v, 247-250.
3. Akhbār, 329-330.
4. Ṭab., vi, 550-553.
5. I. Khay, i, 426 ff.; ii, 461 ff.
6. Murūj, iii, 193.
7. Dhahabī, iv, 10-11, 165-168.
8. Bidāya, ix, 175, 181-183.
9. S. 'Umar, 30-32.
10. Bosworth, 'Rajā' Ibn Ḥaywa Al-Kindī...',
Islamic Quarterly, xvi, (1972) pp. 52-80.

witnessed by Rajā', az-Zuhrī, and one other scholar, their common friend, Makḥūl (d. 112 A.H.). In this way, the strategic plan of Rajā' and az-Zuhrī was successfully accomplished.

On Sulaymān's death, people gathered together in the mosque where the will was read out. After hearing the contents of the will, people started paying allegiance to the new caliph. The person who opened the will was az-Zuhrī, who, after making a short speech himself, read it out before the princes and other members of the family. Al-Mas'ūdī in his Murūj reports: "When death approached Sulaymān.... he sent for Rajā' b. Ḥaywa, Muḥammad b. Shihāb az-Zuhrī and Makḥūl.... and got his will written down and attested by them.... After his death when Banū-Marwān and the members of the public got together.... az-Zuhrī stood up and asked: 'O people, is the nominee of the amīr al-mu'minīn Sulaymān as mentioned in the will acceptable to you?' The people answered: 'Yes'; whereupon az-Zuhrī read out the will in which Sulaymān had nominated 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz as the new caliph and Yazīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik as 'Umar's successor....."⁵⁶

It was quite natural that az-Zuhrī should permanently

56) Murūj, iii, 193. I have omitted certain irrelevant passages from al-Mas'ūdī's report.

associate himself with 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz after the latter's ascension to the throne.⁵⁷ He was a trusted friend of the caliph, who consulted him in various religious and political matters. That 'Umar brought him closer after becoming the caliph was but natural, for he was his old class-fellow and old friend. He carefully listened, therefore, to his suggestions for the amelioration of the social conditions of society and for alleviating and eradicating the injustices of the Umayyad regime. He had full trust in his knowledge and scholarship and consulted him, therefore, in religious issues. He also sought his advice and help in codifying the Islāmic law.

But apart from az-Zuhrī, there were many other scholars who gave religious advice to 'Umar. Among these may be mentioned Sālim b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar (d. 106 A.H.) Abū-Qilāba al-Jarmī (d. 104 A.H.), Rajā' b. Ḥaywa (d. 112 A.H.), Maymūn b. Mihrān (d. 117 A.H.), Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī (d. 117 A.H.), Riyāḥ b. 'Ubayda, 'Abd-al-'Azīz b. Abī-as-Sā'ib, 'Irāk b. Mālik.⁵⁸

57) A. Zur'a, vi, 71b.

58) A. Zur'a, v, 64b.; vi, 71b.; x, 147a.;
I. Sa'd, v, 292.

Az-Zuhrī was, however, in the eyes of 'Umar the most trusted scholar among them. The caliph preferred az-Zuhrī because of his academic superiority over the others. Moreover, being an old friend of 'Umar, az-Zuhrī could have been freely consulted. Thus, paying a tribute to his scholarship, 'Umar once said: "No one was more scrupulous in narrating the ḥadīth in its entirety and with precision than az-Zuhrī."⁵⁹ On another occasion, he is reported to have said: "There is no one living who knows more about the sunna māḍiya than Ibn-Shihāb has survived."⁶⁰

When 'Umar intended to revive the sunna which, in his words, had 'died away',⁶¹ and wished that people who had been neglecting it for sometime should once again realise its importance and regulate their lives in its light, he

59) Nubalā', V, i, 98b.

60) Ḥilya, iii, 360.; Tadhk, i, 109.; Dhahabī, v, 136.

61) Fāṣil, vii, 76a.; S. 'Umar, 38-39, 40, 63, 167.

called upon az-Zuhrī to codify the sunan. Az-Zuhrī responded to the caliph's call, and agreed to undertake the task of codification and accomplished it with success.⁶²

It is clear that 'Umar's success in bringing reforms in his empire during the very brief period of his reign⁶³ was due to az-Zuhrī's association with him. Had he not continually given his valuable advice to 'Umar and had he not undertaken the task of official codification of the sunan, 'Umar would not have been able to issue the circulars concerning Islāmic teachings and law and would not have written a large number of letters to the commanders of the army and the heads of different states. Some of these letters and many legal circulars issued by the caliph after consultation with az-Zuhrī have been narrated by the latter.⁶⁴

Az-Zuhrī and 'Umar used to discuss religious issues among themselves. Sometimes other learned scholars, traditionists and jurists, joined them in these discussions, which often lasted till very late at night.⁶⁵

62) Jāmi', i, 86.; Amwāl, 578-581.

63) His reign lasted for two years and five months. Tab., vi, 565.

64) Muṣa, i, 172-173.; iii, 223.; viii, 428-429.; ix, 408.; x, 14, 93, 96.

65) Dhahabī, iv, 166.; A. Zur'a, v, 64b.; x, 147a.

'Umar took full advantage of the knowledge and scholarship of az-Zuhrī. Not only did he consult az-Zuhrī when he was present in the court but, at times when in his absence the caliph came across an important issue or a legal problem, he sent for him and got it solved. Az-Zuhrī reports: "(Once, when) I called on 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz he asked me whether the hand of a slave who had run away should be amputated. I said that I had heard no tradition about this issue. Thereupon, he remarked that 'Uthmān and Marwān did not cut off the hand of such a person....."⁶⁶ In another report az-Zuhrī says: "'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz once sent for me and said: 'I would like to do away with the law of qasāma.' I Said: 'You should not do so, for this law was promulgated by the Prophet and observed by his succeeding caliphs. Furthermore, if you abrogate this law, perchance a person will be killed at your doorstep, but his blood may not be avenged. In fact it is due to the prevailing law of qasāma that

66) Muṣa., x, 241. The statement "Whether the hand of a slave etc." means "Whether the hand of a fugitive slave should be cut off if, in his flight, he has stolen a thing for which (offence) the punishment under the law is the cutting off of the hand.

the lives of people are secure.'⁶⁷

Az-Zuhrī further reports: "Once, while we were sitting near 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz, a discussion arose about the mut'a form of marriage. A person called

67) Muṣa, x, 39. The law of qasāma is as follows: When a person is found dead in a house or on a road and his murderer is untraceable for lack of sufficient evidence, but the relatives of the deceased name a person suspected of killing the deceased on the basis of his previous enmity or for some other reason: the judge (qāḍī) shall demand that fifty of them should take oath that the said suspected person is the killer. If these fifty swear by Allāh, the suspected person shall be declared guilty and shall be punished. The punishment is either death or blood-wit (ad-diyya). On the other hand, should these fifty people refuse to take oath, the judge shall ask fifty of the suspect's relatives to take oath that he has been wrongly accused. If they do so, he shall be declared not guilty and then acquitted. But if they refuse to take oath, the accused shall be declared guilty and shall be punished accordingly.

See Lisān, v, 381-382.; I. Rushd, ii, 427-432.; Bayhaqī, viii, 117-129.

Rabī' b. Sabura, on the authority of his father, said that the Prophet had declared this form of marriage to be illegal on the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage."⁶⁸

So we see that az-Zuhrī was not the only scholar whom 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz consulted in religious matters. Whenever he came across a religious problem, he asked for rulings on that issue from all the scholars present around him. It is reported, for instance, that once he put forth a juristic problem before Abū-z-Zinād (d. 130 A.H.), Rabī'a ar-Ra'y (d. 136 A.H.) and az-Zuhrī. Az-Zuhrī gave a legal ruling on that issue but it was not acceptable to Rabī'a and Abū-z-Zinād, who opposed his viewpoint. Az-Zuhrī, who was confident of his knowledge, became annoyed, criticised them severely and proved that his ruling was correct and that the view held by them was wrong.⁶⁹ This shows how az-Zuhrī had to face the academic challenge of other scholars before his religious rulings could be accepted. Abū-z-Zinād and Rabī'a were not alone when they differed from az-Zuhrī in some of his juristic rulings and his considered opinions. Sometimes 'Umar himself opposed his viewpoint and challenged it.

68) Jaṣṣāṣ, ii, 183. Mut'at an-nisā' implies a marriage for a limited period of time.

69) I'lām, ii, 26.

Az-Zuhrī himself provides us with this information. He reports: "I said to 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Aziz: 'What prevents you from completing the takbīr while your own governor 'Abd-al-Ḥamīd b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān does so?' He replied: '(In my opinion), it (the formula of the takbīr) should be uttered (only) in the beginning of the prayer.' "

"In this way" continues az-Zuhrī "he did not accept (my viewpoint)." ⁷⁰ To take another example, when 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz came to know that the judge (qāḍī) of Damascus, Sulaymān b. Ḥabīb al-Muḥāribī (d. 126 A.H.) called on az-Zuhrī to consult him concerning the cases that came to his court, he advised him to accept from az-Zuhrī only the ḥadīth and the sunna narrated by him and to reject those of his personal opinions and rulings which contradicted the opinions and rulings of other jurists. Thus Awzā'ī reports: "'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz said to Sulaymān b. Ḥabīb: "Accept whatever (ḥadīth or

70) A. Zur'a, vii, 90b. The completion of the takbīr (itmām at-takbīr) in a prayer means the uttering of the takbīr formula (i.e. Allāhu-akbar) on the following four occasions: (i) while bowing down, (ii) while prostrating, (iii) while standing after doing two prostrations, and (iv) while sitting between two prostrations. Non-completing of the takbīr ('adam itmām at-takbīr), on the other hand, implies the saying of the takbīr formula only at the beginning of the prayer. See, Bukhārī, i, 201-202.; Muslim, i, 146.

sunan) az-Zuhrī narrates to you on the authority of reliable narrators, and reject whatever he gives as his personal opinion (ra'yihī).⁷¹

When az-Zuhrī noticed any error in the judgements or juristic rulings given by 'Umar, he pointed it out to him. Az-Zuhrī cared little whether the caliph accepted his viewpoint or not.⁷² Besides their discussion and exchange of personal opinions, az-Zuhrī and the caliph narrated the aḥādīth from each other and discussed the sunan and the āthār between themselves. It appears that in this field 'Umar was more benefitted by az-Zuhrī than az-Zuhrī by 'Umar. This is so because the duration of the period of study of az-Zuhrī was several years longer than that of 'Umar and also because az-Zuhrī possessed a more retentive memory. 'Umar himself acknowledges that az-Zuhrī possessed a more powerful memory. Thus Ma'mar quotes az-Zuhrī as saying: "I spent a night with 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz narrating the aḥādīth to him. The caliph remarked: "Although I have heard all that you have narrated tonight, yet I have forgotten while

71) Dhahabī, v, 144.; A. Zur'a, v, 61b.

72) See A. Zur'a, vii, 90b, and compare between two reports occurring in Muṣa, x, 38-39.

you still remember.' "73

Had 'Umar lived longer and had his reign lasted for a few more years, 'Umar and az-Zuhrī would undoubtedly have continued to co-operate in the service and for the benefit of the community. But unfortunately, his premature death brought a sad end to their close friendship and their fruitful co-operation. Nevertheless, they made a significant contribution in the field of learning and religion and played an important role in the history of Islām, even during 'Umar's short reign of about two and a half years.

73) Dhahabī, iv, 166.; Tadhk, i, 119.; Bidāya, ix, 195.; For az-Zuhrī's riwāyāt from 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz, see Muṣa, i, 172-173.; iii, 223.; Zuhd, 8a.; Muslim, i, 330.

(v) Qādī under Yazīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik

After the death of 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz, Yazīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik (101-105 A.H.) ascended the throne. Although he cannot be compared with 'Umar in learning and scholarship, in piety and justice⁷⁴ and in administrative and political calibre he was definitely an admirer of az-Zuhrī like his predecessor. Thus he revered az-Zuhrī in the manner 'Umar did. Recognising his scholarship and admitting his capabilities, he offered him the post of judge (qādī) of the capital, Damascus.⁷⁵ This was the highest judicial post in the Islāmic world at that time. Az-Zuhrī, therefore, accepted it readily and carried out his duties without any difficulty. His thorough legal knowledge and his previous experience helped him a great deal in making decisions even in such complicated cases as could not have been tackled by his colleagues and jurist friends. For this remarkable achievement az-Zuhrī was highly praised by some of the contemporary poets, who wrote panegyries about his juristic abilities. Ma'n b. 'Īsā reports the nephew of

74) Murūj, iii, 206 ff.; Dhahabī, iv, 212-214.;
Ma'ārif, 124.

75) Ma'ārif, 162.; Futū. Miṣ., 104 where we find his judgment on a complicated case.; A. Zur'a, v, 61a.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 499b.

Ibn-Shihāb⁷⁶ as saying: "One of the Umayyad caliphs wrote a letter to my uncle asking about the rule regarding the sharing of inheritance by a hermaphrodite. He enquired whether such a person should be treated as male or female for the purpose of determining his share. In answer to this letter, he informed him that the deciding factor as to whether he should be treated as a male or a female would be the organ through which he urinated. If he urinated through the male organ, he would be considered a man; but if he urinated through the female organ, he would be treated as a female. However, if he urinated through both the organs jointly the deciding factor would be the organ from which the urine came out first.⁷⁷

76) i.e. Muḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Muslim az-Zuhrī
(d. 152 A.H.)

77) A hermaphrodite is a human being about whom it is not known whether he is a male or a female. He possesses both male and female organs - a small penis and a vagina. In determining the share of inheritance of such a person, the deciding factor is the organ through which he urinates. If he urinates through the penis, he is considered a male; and receives, therefore, two shares. If he urinates through the vagina, he is treated a female and receives only one share. But, if the penis and vagina are intermingled with each other or (when he urinates) the urine comes out from both organs, the deciding factor (on the basis of which he is treated a male or a female) is the organ from which the urine comes out first or in larger quantity.

Ma'n adds that a person from az-Zuhrī's land⁷⁸ heard his report and said: "Did you not hear what the poet remarked when az-Zuhrī gave the above juristic ruling." Ma'n said: "No" and asked what it was. He said that the poet⁷⁹ eulogised him in these laudatory words:

"A very important matter was brought to you, (O! Zuhrī)

A matter which perplexed the judges.

And left the jurist wondering at his ignorance.

But you grilled the lamb before you skinned it.

(i.e., you passed judgment without hesitation).

And carved it with a very sharp edge.

(i.e., you explained it in detail)

So you made clear to the just caliph

and the pious people,

What was previously an enigma."

80

With a view to carrying out his duties well in the field of judiciary and to implement quickly and justly his judgments on cases brought to him in the court of Damascus,

78) "Az-Zuhrī's land" means the villages granted to az-Zuhrī by the Umayyad caliphs. They were: Adāmā, Shaghb and Badā.

79) The poet's name was Fāyid b. Aqran who had commended him on various occasions. See Fāsil, ii, 17b.; Dhahabī, v, 147-148.

80) A. Zur'a, ix, 117b.; Fāsil, ii, 17b.

az-Zuhrī looked for the precedents during the period commencing from the Prophet's time to the time of Yazīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik. For this purpose, he studied the juristic rulings (al-fatāwā) and legal decisions given during the reigns of the Rightly-guided caliphs (al-khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn) and of the Umayyad caliphs. He also made a study of the functions of the courts and the role of judges in earlier times. As a result of his studies and research into these matters, a copious amount of valuable material was collected regarding the history of the court decisions and the judges in the first century after the Hijra.⁸¹

A study of the juristic rulings and legal decisions of az-Zuhrī shows that he used to base his judgments on the decisions given by the Prophet and the 'Rightly guided caliphs.' He considered them as binding precedents and believed that the judgments of judges and arbitrators must conform to the decisions of the Prophet. Therefore, in his opinion, while deciding a case or giving any legal opinion a judge must bear in mind the Prophet's decisions. He held that judges were in no way at liberty to give a judgment contrary to the decisions of the Prophet.⁸²

81) Muṣa, vii, 99, 153, 219, 234, 267, 278, 297, 306, 314, 316, 319, 334, 337, 340, 345, 351, 361, 377, 379, 380, 390, 409, 435, 501-503; viii, 88, 286, 302, 333, 339, 392, 427, 429; ix, 103, 114, 167, 288-291, 420, 435; x, 95-96, 120, 129, 266, 278, 326.

82) Muṣa, x, 39.

Az-Zuhrī bound himself by this precept. Thus we see that, whenever he decided a case or gave a juristic ruling about a problem, his judgments and legal opinions were either preceded or followed by the statements like these: " 'The Prophet or the Messenger so decided...', 'The Prophet and the caliphs after him gave their judgments in this manner...', 'This was the ruling during the Prophet's time and the age of Abū-Bakr and 'Umar', or 'In this way Abū-Bakr decided the case', or 'That is how 'Umar and 'Uthmān gave the judgments', or 'The judgments were given in the beginning in this manner'. "83

While deciding the cases brought to him, az-Zuhrī first looked into the judgments given by the Prophet and the 'Rightly guided caliphs'. But if he found no precedents there, he referred to the considered opinions of such eminent Companions as were known for their knowledge of sunna and for their juristic ability, and decided the cases in the light of these opinions.⁸⁴ If a precedent of the juristic rulings and the considered opinions of the Companions was not available he used to

83) Muṣa, vi, 62, 182.; vii, 125, 219, 234, 278, 395, 435.; x, 32, 39, 95-96.

84) The Companions whose juristic rulings and considered opinions were mostly referred to by az-Zuhrī were: Zayd b. Thābit, 'Ā'isha, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās, and 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar. See Muṣa, vi, 286, 292.; vii, 351, 383, 390, 395, 464, 474.; viii, 30, 413, 429.

refer to those of his teachers from amongst the Medinan Successors like Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib (d. 94 A.H.), 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh (d. 98 A.H.), and Sālim b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar. Very often, when no precedent was found, he withheld, and refused to pronounce, his judgment till he succeeded in finding a precedent.⁸⁵

Az-Zuhrī noticed that many laws and juristic rulings introduced during the Umayyad period were at variance with the sunna of the Prophet and the 'Rightly-guided caliphs.' He informed his students about these laws and rulings, and apprised them of the name of the Umayyad caliph in whose reign it was first introduced, and of the name of the judge who first decided a case in the light of those laws. Thus Ma'mar reports az-Zuhrī as saying: "The blood money of a Jew, a Christian, a Magian or any dhimmī for that purpose, is like the blood money of a Muslim. It was so during the Prophet's lifetime and in the time of Abū-Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān. It was Mu'āwiya who for the first time reserved half of its fund for the public treasury (bayt al-māl) and half for the family of the deceased."⁸⁶

Quoting another innovation of the Umayyad period,

85) Muṣa, ii, 287.; vii, 122.; viii, 446, 484.; x, 241.

86) Muṣa, x, 95-96.; See Jaṣṣāṣ, i, 615.; ii, 292.; Bayhaqī, viii, 100-103.; I. Rushd, ii, 414.

Ibn-Jurayj reports az-Zuhrī as saying: "The evidences of the minors (al-ghilmān) were never accepted in the courts of law. It was the caliph Marwān who for the first time made it legally acceptable."⁸⁷ To take another example. Ibn-Abī-Dhi'b reports: "I asked Ibn-Shihāb about the rule regarding 'the oath together with the witness'. He replied: 'It is an innovation (bid'a), and the one who

87) Muṣa, viii, 351. The term 'al-ghilmān' refers to those boys who have not reached the age of maturity, who are not considered accountable and whose evidences prove no claim or right. This was the law regarding the minors during the time of the Prophet and the caliphs after him. But in Marwān's time, the testimony of minors against minors was considered acceptable in the courts of law in the interest of the community. Thus, if a boy broke the arm of another boy and other boys who were present at the time of the incident gave evidence, the testimony of these minor witnesses was accepted. But the evidence of minors against men or women was not, however, accepted. This is one of many controversial issues in Islāmic jurisprudence. See I. Rushd, ii, 463.; Bayhaqī, x, 161-162. What I have explained above is the most simple exposition of the said juristic ruling.

first accepted it as legally valid was Mu'āwiya'. "88

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- 88) Muwaṭṭa', 301. Ibn-Abī-Dhi'b enquired of Ibn-Shihāb whether the law 'that the plaintiff's statement, if given on oath, and attested by only one witness, is acceptable in the courts of law' was a sunna. Az-Zuhrī's reply to this question was in the negative. He said that it was rather a bid'a.

The law regarding 'al-yamīn ma'a sh-Shāhid' (lit. oath together with the witness) may be explained as follows: When a person claims a certain right from another person, Islāmic law of evidence requires him (the plaintiff) to produce proof in support of his claim. This proof should be given in the form of two reliable male witnesses or one reliable male and two reliable female witnesses. The problem arises when the plaintiff has only one witness. In such cases, two alternative suggestions have been advanced. According to some jurists, the plaintiff in these cases first gives his own statement on oath, which is considered equal to one witness. Then he produces one actual witness who corroborates his statement. In this way, the court proceeds as if two independent witnesses have been produced by the plaintiff.

But other jurists do not accept the plaintiff's oath as equivalent to one witness. Instead, they demand that two independent witnesses should be produced. The issue is, however, controversial. For different viewpoints in this matter, see, Tamhīd, ii, 134-157.; Bayhaqī, x, 167-176.

Despite Yazīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik's awareness that az-Zuhrī criticised these laws, calling them 'bid'a' and 'ḥadath' i.e. innovation,⁸⁹ and declaring them to be contrary to sunna, he did not object to his criticism and did not interfere in the discharge of his official duties. This shows that the Umayyad rulers did not interfere in the judicial matters of the courts and left the judges to act freely in the interest of justice. No doubt these rulers did intervene in the administrative policies of the provincial governors and other officials,⁹⁰ and some of them are said to have been obdurate and deprived the people of their legal rights. The judiciary during this period remained independent and functioned freely.

There are apparently two main reasons why upright scholars like az-Zuhrī and others⁹¹ agreed to act as judges under the Umayyads. Firstly, they considered judicial functions as obligatory religious duties. In their opinion, it was through the judiciary that religious laws could be implemented and actions regulated in accordance with the sunna. Moreover, they believed that the rights and interests of the people could be well

89) Muwaṭṭa', 301.; Muṣa, iii, 192.

90) See Murūj, iii, 212-213.

91) See p. 103

looked after by an honest and just judiciary.⁹² Secondly, they accepted the judicial posts because (on the whole) the Umayyad rulers, as we have seen earlier, did not intervene in the discharge of the official duties of the judges. In fact, the God-fearing religious scholars who accepted the posts of judges under the Umayyads did not allow these rulers to interfere with their duties or to influence, in any way, their rulings or judgments.

Az-Zuhrī, too, accepted the post of a judge with the intention of looking after the interests and rights of the people. Being a religious scholar, he considered it a duty to decide the cases with justice. He carried out this duty without caring for people's admiration or reproofs and without fearing to lose his job. What he earnestly wanted was to impart justice and to safeguard the rights of the people. He used to say: "There are three things which disqualify a judge: dislike of criticism,

92) There are various aḥādīth exhorting the competent scholars to accept the posts of judges in the larger interest of the community. For the traditions about judicial matters and for the aḥādīth both warning against, and those recommending, the acceptance of the posts of judges and interpretation of scholars of these aḥādīth, see Bayhaqī, x, 86-101.; Māwardī, 74.; A. Ya'1ā, 62.

love of praise and fear of dismissal." ⁹³ Since az-Zuhrī lacked them all, he found in himself the qualifications of a competent judge. He, therefore, accepted this post and carried out his duties honestly and sincerely. ⁹⁴

93) A. Zur'a, i, 13a.

94) Goldziher has, however, doubted the integrity of az-Zuhrī and criticised him for accepting the post of a judge. He accused him of fabricating the ahādīth in favour of the Umayyads and held that az-Zuhrī concocted the traditions to legalise the actions and the practices of these rulers. In order to prove his allegation he asserted that az-Zuhrī willingly worked for the Umayyad cause, had unhesitatingly accepted official posts under them and had agreed to become a tutor to Hishām's sons and accepted the post of judge offered by Yazīd II. Criticising az-Zuhrī's acceptance of the post of judge, Goldziher said that by doing so az-Zuhrī acted against the teachings of Islam and ignored the Prophet's traditions warning against the acceptance of judicial posts under tyrant rulers like the Umayyads, and the traditions cautioning against associating with unjust rulers. [Goldziher quoted two ahādīth about the former (warning against the acceptance of the post of judge) and one regarding the latter (cautioning against keeping company with rulers)]

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(footnote no. 94 continued)

He further said that az-Zuhrī was quite different from those pious scholars who not only refused to co-operate with the Umayyads, but openly opposed them. In order to show this difference, he compared az-Zuhrī with an 'Irāqī scholar ash-Sha'bī and pointed out how the latter took part in the rebellion of Ibn-al-Ash'ath against the Umayyads while the former, to a great extent, supported them. Moreover, unlike az-Zuhrī, ash-Sha'bī declined the post of a judge. Lest he was forced by the Umayyad rulers to accept this post, he pretended to have become insane and came out on the streets to while away his time among mischievous boys. (See Goldziher, 47-49).

Goldziher's criticism can easily mislead those who possess scant knowledge about az-Zuhrī. Such people might consider the allegations against az-Zuhrī to be true. But one who has made a thorough study of az-Zuhrī and possesses sufficient knowledge about him shall clearly discover the mistake committed by Goldziher in his criticism against az-Zuhrī. Such a person will see that his criticism is unsubstantial and fallacious, having no valid academic grounds. The fallacies involved in this criticism are the following:

- (1) Against the group of those pious scholars who refrained from co-operating with the Umayyad

(footnote continues)

(footnote no. 94 continued)

rulers or from accepting official posts under them, there was a group of other pious scholars who co-operated with them and accepted various posts, including that of judges. Among the scholars who accepted the post of a judge during az-Zuhrī's lifetime, and also before and after him included: 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Utba (d. 75 A.H.), Shurayḥ al-Qādī (d. 87 A.H.), Abū-Idrīs al-Khulānī (d. 80 A.H.), 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Adhīna (d. 95 A.H.), 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Yazīd b. Jāriya (d. 98 A.H.) As-Sha'bī (d. 104 A.H.), Ḥakam b. 'Uṭayba (d. 114 A.H.), Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm (d. 128 A.H.), Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Anṣārī (d. 143 A.H.) and Muḥammad b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Abī-Laylā (d. 148 A.H.). Apart from them, there were many more who agreed to act as judges under the Umayyads (see. I. Khay, i, 322, 343, 389, 390, 420.; ii, 486, 543-544.; A. Zur'a, i, 12). Under such circumstances the acceptance of any job whatsoever - and the post of a judge in particular - was, in a way, an act contrary to religious teachings, as Goldziher tried to prove. If Goldziher's views were to be accepted, all those pious scholars who accepted the posts of judge would be considered as opponents of religion - an assertion made by none. Thus Goldziher's objections to az-Zuhrī's acceptance of the post of a judge is baseless.

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(footnote no. 94 continued)

- (2) The traditions warning against accepting the posts of judge and keeping company with the rulers, some of which have been quoted by Goldziher, are quite well known. But these traditions have been interpreted by the scholars as follows: The former category of traditions warns those who accepted the post of a judge without being worthy of it, or those who accepted it but did not adjudicate honestly, or those who accepted it for material gains only.

The second category of traditions warns those who associated themselves with the rulers for their material gains and remained silent over their injustices and tyrannies, and did not advise them to do justice among the people.

The above traditions, quoted by Goldziher in support of his accusations, are quite inappropriate in the case of az-Zuhrī; for he was competent enough to act as a judge, and used to adjudicate honestly during the tenure of his office. He gave valuable advice to the Umayyad rulers and apprised them of the right course of actions. Examples abound where az-Zuhrī openly contradicted the opinions of the Umayyad rulers and informed them of the correct rulings with regard to

(footnote continues)

(footnote no. 94 continued)

religious issues. We do not know why Goldziher quoted only those traditions which warn against the acceptance of the post of judge and completely refrained from citing those which encourage the acceptance of the post and to adjudicate judicially and equitably. For both kinds of these aḥādīth and their interpretation by reliable scholars see Bayhaqī, x, 86-101.

- (3) Goldziher rightly tells us that ash-Sha'bī refused to co-operate with the Umayyads, took part in the rising against them and declined to accept the post of judge; but he does not mention that later on ash-Sha'bī restored his relationship with the Umayyads, co-operated with them, accepted the post of a judge under them, became the envoy of 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān and tutor to his sons. Thus we see that az-Zuhrī and ash-Sha'bi both co-operated with the Umayyads and accepted posts under them. Goldziher's criticism against az-Zuhrī is, therefore, untenable. (For ash-Sha'bī and the posts he accepted under the Umayyads, see I. Khay, i, 389.; Tab., vi, 589.; Ma'ārif, 156.; Baghdād, xii, 227-232).

(footnote no. 94 ends).

Despite the fact that az-Zuhrī was overburdened with work and had to shoulder heavy responsibilities as judge of Damascus, he did not neglect the carrying out of his other duties of teaching and counselling the Umayyad rulers in the larger interest of the community. He did not delay or hesitate in extending his advice to the provincial rulers in matters where the rights of people and their general well-being were endangered. Thus, he gave his valuable advice to 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk when in 101 A.H. he was appointed governor of Medina by the caliph Yazīd. Similarly, when in 104 A.H. the caliph deposed Ibn-aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk and appointed 'Abd-al-Wāḥid b. Bishr in his place, az-Zuhrī favoured the new governor with his advice. Ibn-aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk was dismissed because he did not listen to and act upon the advice of az-Zuhrī. Referring to this event, Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Abī-Farwa quotes az-Zuhrī as saying: "I said to 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk, 'You are going to a people who will disapprove of everything that is against their usual practice. You should follow, therefore, their agreed practice and consult, in this connection, al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad and Sālim b. 'Abd-Allāh who will sincerely advise you as to the right course of action.' But he took no notice of these things and showed open hostility towards the Anṣārs and dealt unjustly with Abū-Bakr b. Ḥazm. Consequently, he was defamed by the poets who composed derogatory verses about him. Similarly, he lost his respect in the eyes of pious people. He was continually censured till the reign of Hishām. Thus

when I saw him in this period, I found him a humble man."

Az-Zuhrī continues: "When 'Abd-al-Wāḥid b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Bishr became the governor of Medina, he ruled so justly that the Medinans considered him as the most loveable ruler. He ruled with justice and looked after the interests of the people. When he decided to take any action, he first consulted al-Qāsim and Sālim.⁹⁵

Before we conclude the discussion of az-Zuhrī's role as a judge, let us relate an interesting anecdote regarding the caliph Yazīd and his judge az-Zuhrī. Abū-l-Faraj reports: "One summer night, on the balcony of the palace, Yazīd's concubine Ḥabbāba recited a few verses of al-Aḥwaṣ. The caliph asked her: 'Whose verses are these?' Ḥabbāba replied: 'I swear by your beautiful eyes that I do not know the name of the composer.' Yazīd thereupon sent for Ibn-Shihāb az-Zuhrī, in the middle of the night, hoping that he knew the name of the poet. When the caliph's messenger reached az-Zuhrī's house at such an odd hour and knocked on his door, az-Zuhrī became frightened. He came out of the house, however, and went to the caliph's court accompanied by his messenger. Finding az-Zuhrī in a frightened and perturbed condition, the caliph pacified him saying: 'Take your seat. There is nothing to be scared of.

95) Tab., vi, 574-575.; vii, 14.

I have called you to enquire who is the composer of these verses.' Az-Zuhrī readily replied: 'Al-Aḥwaṣ b. Muḥammad, O amīr al-mu'minīn.....' "96

The uniqueness of the above story and the style of its narration clearly shows that it is one of those night-conversations (samar) with which Abū- l-Faraj has filled the pages of his Aghānī and most of which are mere legends and hence incredible. It looks unbelievable that the caliph would send for a religious scholar like az-Zuhrī to enquire about the name of the poet whose verses were sung by his concubine in the middle of the night. We know that the caliph had many courtiers and fellow-drinkers who possessed more knowledge about the poetry and life of the poets than az-Zuhrī. These persons used to entertain the caliph by reciting poetry or narrating interesting stories.⁹⁷ Thus it was they, and not az-Zuhrī, who should have been consulted by the caliph to find out the name of the composer of the verses recited by the concubine.

- 96) Aghā., iv, 248. For full anecdote, see iv, 246-250, and for Ḥabbāba, the concubine of Yazīd, see xv, 122 ff.
- 97) Ḥammād ar-Rāwīya, for instance, was employed by Yazīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik for this purpose. For boon companions of Yazīd, see Nuzha, 23-26.; Aghā., vi, 70-71, 92.; Jāh. Hay., iv, 47.

It seems unlikely that Yazīd, or for that matter any other caliph, howsoever unconventional he might be, would invite a pious religious scholar or reputed judge like az-Zuhrī to witness his licentious private life. This aspect of the caliphs' lives would be generally known to their close companions from amongst the poets and singers, and not to the religious scholars, the traditionists (al-muḥaddithūn), the jurists (al-fuqahā') and the judges (al-quḍāt). It seems unthinkable, therefore, that Yazīd would let such a pious scholar as az-Zuhrī know about his irreligious and impious private life.

However, there are other reports which narrate the above strange story without mentioning az-Zuhrī's name.⁹⁸ It is probable that his name in some reports has been inserted to make the story interesting.

(vi) Az-Zuhrī in Hishām's reign

After the death of Yazīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik (101-105 A.H.) his brother Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik (105-125 A.H.)⁹⁹ ascended the throne. During the early years of his caliphate

98) According to one report Ḥabbāba knew the name of the poet and mentioned it to the caliph when he asked about it. See Aghā., iv, 250.

99) Tab., vii, 25., I. Khay., ii, 481.; Murūj, iii, 26.

all the renowned scholars of Mecca, Medina, Kufa, Baṣra and Ṣan'ā' passed away. Among those who died in this period were: 'Ikrima (d. 105 A.H.), Ṭā'ūs b. Kaysān (d. 106 A.H.) Sālim b. 'Abd-Allāh (d. 106 A.H.) Sulaymān b. Yasār (d. 107 A.H.), al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad (d. 108 A.H.), al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110 A.H.), Muḥammad b. Sīrīn (d. 110 A.H.)¹⁰⁰

(a) His academic stature

After the death of these scholars, az-Zuhrī attained the highest rank among his contemporaries. His thorough knowledge and profound scholarship brought him fame and he got access to the court of Hishām. The caliph made him his boon companion and paid him much respect. No wonder, therefore, that he became an influential person in the caliph's court.

As regards his scholarship, al-Awzā'ī (d. 157 A.H.) said: "Hishām's reign saw no one from amongst the Successors (at-tābi'īn) more learned (afqah) than az-Zuhrī."¹⁰¹ Similarly, Mālik (d. 179 A.H.) used to say: "Ibn-Shihāb has remained unrivalled."¹⁰² According to another version: "He is unrivalled in the whole

100) Tadhk., i, 71, 77, 88, 90, 91, 95-97.

101) A. Zur'a, v, 60.

102) Tadhk., i, 109.; Tarājim, 72.; Bidāya, ix, 343.

(Islāmic) world."¹⁰³ His colleagues and contemporary scholars acknowledged his academic superiority and paid him the compliments given to only a few. Makḥūl (d. 112 A.H.) for instance, said: "Ibn-Shihāb was the best scholar (a'lam an-nās)."¹⁰⁴ Similarly, Ayyūb as-Sikhtiyānī (d. 131 A.H.) is reported to have said: "I have not seen a person more knowledgeable than az-Zuhrī."¹⁰⁵ To take another example, Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Anṣārī (d. 143 A.H.) remarked: "No one possesses the knowledge possessed by az-Zuhrī."¹⁰⁶

In the opinion of his colleagues, az-Zuhrī possessed encyclopaedic knowledge. They believed that he was capable of answering any question put to him. That is why, when in reply to a question az-Zuhrī said: "I do not know". Abū-z-Zinād (d. 130 A.H.) was surprised. He himself reports: "I was sitting near Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik when he asked az-Zuhrī: 'In which month Uthmān used to send stipends (al-'aṭā') to the people of Medina?' Az-Zuhrī expressed his ignorance on this matter and said: 'I do not know'." Abū-z-Zinād says: "(It was surprising to us because) we believed that Ibn-Shihāb could furnish information about

103) Tadhk., i, 109.; Tarājim, 72.; Bidāya, ix, 343.

104) Dhahabī, v, 149.; See I. Sa'd, II, ii, 136.; Ḥilya, iii, 360.; Also see Bidāya, ix, 343.; A. Zur'a, v, 60a.

105) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 135-136.; Bidāya, ix, 343.; Jarḥ, IV, i, 73.; A. Zur'a, v, 61b.

106) Dhahabī, v, 148.

anything enquired from him."¹⁰⁷

Az-Zuhrī's colleagues and contemporaries not only admitted his superiority over themselves, but many of them considered him superior even to his teachers and other scholars. Thus 'Amr b. Dīnār (d. 126 A.H.) reports: "I attended the lectures of Ibn-'Abbās, Ibn-'Umar, Jābir and Ibn-az-Zubayr, but found none of them so well-versed and expert in ḥadīth transmission (ansaq li-l-ḥadīth) as az-Zuhrī."¹⁰⁸ To take another example, 'Irāk b. Mālik, after mentioning the high academic standard of Ibn-al-Musayyib, 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr and 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh, said: "In my opinion, the most learned among them is az-Zuhrī, for his knowledge is the sum total of all the knowledge possessed by them."¹⁰⁹ Abū-Bakr al-Hudhalī is of the same opinion, who says: "We attended the lectures of al-Ḥasan and Ibn-Sīrīn but found none of them so learned as az-Zuhrī."¹¹⁰

But while it is admitted that az-Zuhrī was the most learned among the scholars of Hishām's reign, it cannot be said that he was more knowledgeable than Ibn-al-Musayyib and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. Similarly, he cannot be considered

107) Mizzī, v, under the rubric 'Abū-z- Zinād'.;
See I. Khall., iii, 317.

108) Nubalā', V, i, 98b.; Dhahabī, v, 145-146.;
Bidāya, ix, 342, where the word 'ansaq' is replaced
by the word 'asbaq' (lit. superior).

109) Dhahabī, v, 137.; Tarājim, 68.

110) I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 22.; I. Sa'd, II, ii, 135.;
Dhahabī, v, 138, 148-149.

more expert in ḥadīth transmission (ansaq li-l-ḥadīth) than Ibn-‘Abbās and Ibn-‘Umar. The above statements of ‘Amr b. Dīnār, ‘Irāk b. Mālik and Abū-Bakr al-Hudhalī are mere exaggerations and should not, therefore, be taken literally. What in fact their statements imply is this, that az-Zuhrī was the most eminent scholar of his time. In no way did these scholars wish to compare az-Zuhrī with the scholars from amongst the Companions and the Successors and to prove his superiority over them.

However, his colleagues and contemporary scholars admitted his superiority over themselves. Az-Zuhrī himself claimed that he was academically better than them and expressed this opinion in front of his pupils. Once when one of his students, Muḥammad b. Ishāq (d. 151 A.H.), consulted him on an academic issue he said: "No one in the (Islāmic) world (lit. what is between the east and the west) is more knowledgeable about this problem than I am."¹¹¹

Although az-Zuhrī was confident of his wide, thorough knowledge about the ḥadīth, he never claimed to have known all the traditions of the Prophet. He admitted that he did not know half of those aḥādīth. Undoubtedly, his claim about his deep knowledge was far from being a boast. It was rather an expression of his self-confidence - the

111) I. ‘Asākir, xiv, 500a.

sort of claim made by the great scholars of every age. That az-Zuhrī did not claim to have known the entire collection of aḥādīth is evident from a report emanating from Ismā'īl b. Muḥammad. He says: "I narrated the following ḥadīth in the presence of az-Zuhrī: 'It is reported on the authority of 'Āmir b. Sa'd, who reported it on the authority of his father who said: 'I saw the Prophet turning his face towards his right and his left at the end of the prayer. It seems that I am still looking at his cheek.' When az-Zuhrī heard this tradition, he remarked: 'I have not heard this Prophetic tradition.' Thereupon I asked: 'Have you not heard all the traditions of the Prophet?' To this he replied: 'No.' Then I asked: 'Not even half of it?' He said: 'No.' I thereafter said: 'Then consider it among the half of the traditions not heard by you.' "112

Az-Zuhrī shouldered the heavy responsibility of academic leadership with sincerity and honesty. He proved himself worthy of the knowledge and scholarship which had accorded him this high academic status and had given him such great fame. He treasured this knowledge with his heart. It was on account of this thorough knowledge that he could take a firm stand in academic matters in the court of Hishām. Once, when the caliph wanted to

112) I'1ām, ii, 360.

interpret a Qur'ānic verse according to his own will, az-Zuhrī pointed out his mistake in such a convincing manner that befitted only the conscientious and self-respecting great scholars. His boldness in religious matters displeased the caliph.

The caliph expressed his resentment by threatening to dismiss him from the tutelage of the princes and to stop repayment of loans which he had agreed to pay on az-Zuhrī's behalf. But this threat could not deter him from his firm and bold stand in religious matters. The caliph Hishām, therefore, had to change his attitude about az-Zuhrī. Soon, the old relationship between them was restored and the caliph favoured az-Zuhrī by paying half of his heavy debts. The story of the caliph's displeasure with az-Zuhrī and the settling of their differences thereafter, has been clearly given in the following report:

Ash-Shāfi'ī reports his uncle as saying: "When Sulaymān b. Yasār once called on Hishām, the caliph asked him: 'Who is referred to in the verse, '... for him among them who had the greater share therein....?' Sulaymān replied: 'The person referred to in the verse is Ibn-Salūl.' Hishām disagreed with him and said: 'You are a liar, for the man referred to is 'Alī.' Meanwhile, Ibn-Shihāb entered and the caliph put the same question to him, saying: 'O Ibn-Shihāb! who is referred to in the

verse '...for him among them who had the greater share therein...?' He said: 'Ibn-Ubayy'. The caliph again replied: 'You are lying, for it was 'Alī.' Az-Zuhrī became angry over this and said: 'May your father die, you say I am lying. By Allāh, even if a proclaimer announces from Heaven that Allāh has permitted lying I will not tell lies. Sa'īd, 'Urwa, 'Ubayd-Allāh and 'Alqama b. Abī-Waqqāṣ have all reported on the authority of 'Ā'isha that the person referred to in the verse '...for him among them who had the greater share therein...' was 'Abd-Allāh b. Ubayy.' 'Afterwards,' says the report: 'the caliph's courtiers began to cast aspersions against az-Zuhrī. Consequently, the caliph, influenced by their jealous vilification, said to az-Zuhrī: 'Go away, for by Allāh we do not need guidance from a person like you.' Az-Zuhrī readily replied: 'Why do you feel ashamed to receive instruction from me? It was yourself who asked my services to instruct your children and to guide you in religious matters, and not me who called on you. (I do not mind, therefore, leaving the court). So allow me to leave and do not stop me from going away.' Hearing this, the caliph said: 'No, I shall not let you go, for you are burdened with heavy debts amounting to two million dirhems.' But az-Zuhrī replied: 'You should not worry about that; for you very well know, as your father knew before, that I do not owe these debts to you or to your father.' Hishām, in this reply, noticed az-Zuhrī's resentment. He, therefore, admitted his own fault and tried to retain him

by saying: 'Verily, it was I who suddenly made the teacher (ash-shaykh) angry.' Afterwards, he ordered the repayment of half of az-Zuhrī's total loan, i.e. one million dirhems. When az-Zuhrī came to know about this, he remarked: 'Praise be to Allāh by whose grace such a great favour was shown to me.' "113

113) Dhahabī, v, 149-150.; Tarājim, 72-73.

The verse '...for him among them who had the greater share therein...?' (Qur'ān, 24, 11.) deals with the slander about 'Ā'isha, the Prophet's wife. Ibn-Salūl and Ibn-Ubayy refer to 'Abd-Allāh b. Ubayy b. Salūl, the leader of the Hypocrites (al-munāfiqīn). Hishām, on account of his enmity against 'Alī, tried to misinterpret the above verse and laid the blame of slandering and defaming 'Ā'isha on 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib. This shows that some Umayyad caliphs and princes used to accuse 'Alī of slandering 'Ā'isha. It was az-Zuhrī who corrected their mistake and explained the real meaning of the Qur'ānic verse. Prior to Hishām's reign, al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik had also asked az-Zuhrī about the person referred to in the above verse. Az-Zuhrī had informed him that the person referred to was Ubayy. Al-Walīd had considered this interpretation of az-Zuhrī as correct. During Hishām's reign the same question was put to az-Zuhrī, who gave the same answer to the caliph. Tafsīr, 63a.; Bukhārī, iii, 109.; Hilya, iii, 369.; Dhahabī, v, 145.

The above report of ash-Shāfi'ī (d. 204 A.H.), clearly illustrates that az-Zuhrī had good and honourable relationship with the Umayyad rulers. It clearly indicates that his friendship with them was sincere and respectable.¹¹⁴ It proves that these Umayyad caliphs used to show respect for az-Zuhrī and had a high opinion of his scholarship and good manners. They themselves wished, therefore, to keep company with him. Had it not been the case, Hishām would not have changed his mind about parting with az-Zuhrī, would not have appeased him by rewarding him, and would not have overlooked and left unnoticed the harsh words uttered by az-Zuhrī in the presence of the courtiers.

(b) His love of teaching and propagation of knowledge

The caliph Hishām not only appointed az-Zuhrī as instructor to his sons,¹¹⁵ but also assigned him the special duty of looking after his eldest son, Maslama b. Hishām whom the caliph wished to become his successor in place of the legal heir al-Walīd b. Yazīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik (d. 126 A.H.)¹¹⁶

114) cf. Goldziher, 44 ff regarding Goldziher's view about az-Zuhrī's relationship with the Umayyads.

115) Muḥabbar, 476; I. 'Asākir, 499b.; Nubalā', V, i, 97.; Dhahabī, v, 140. Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik had fifteen sons. For their names see 'Iqd, v, 208.

116) Tab. vii, 138, 209 ff.; A. Zur'a, viii, 94a.; Aghā., vii, 3.

Az-Zuhrī's job as tutor and guide to the princes paved the way for the dissemination of knowledge. It provided him with a good opportunity to spend all his time and energy in the field of teaching and training. The last twenty years spent in Hishām's reign (105-125 A.H.) can be considered as the best years of az-Zuhrī's life, for they yielded the most fruitful results in knowledge and scholarship. During this period, he devoted himself fully to teaching. He taught in the palace, in the Damascus mosque, in his houses at Mahallat ar-Rāhib in Damascus¹¹⁷ and in ar-Ruṣāfa,¹¹⁸ in his village at Ayla,¹¹⁹ in al-Jazīra,¹²⁰ in al-Maṣṣīṣa,¹²¹ and during his visits to

- 117) A. Zur'a, iii, 27a.; Dhahabī, v, 150, where ar-Rāhib has been described as a locality in the outskirts of Damascus situated near the prayer ground for 'Id prayers.
- 118) I. Sa'd, VII, ii, 175.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric Muḥammad b. al-Walīd az-Zubaydī.; Bukh Ṣa, 161; Dhahabī, v, 141.; A. Zur'a, vi, 67b. Ruṣafa was a town built in the north of Syria by Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik. Hence its name 'Ruṣāfat Hishām' (The Ruṣāfa of Hishām). Also see Ṭab, vii, 207 for at-Ṭabarī's view regarding ar-Ruṣāfa.
- 119) Ayla was a famous city on the coast of the Red Sea situated on the borders of Palestine, Egypt and Ḥijaz. See Buldān, i, 422 ff; Khiṭaṭ, 184.
- 120) Al-Jazīra was a region situated between the Euphrates and the Tigris. Today the north-east area of Syria is known as al-Jazīra. See Buldān, ii, 114.
- 121) Al-Maṣṣīṣa was a city on the frontiers of Syria situated between Anṭākiya and Bilād ar-Rūm. See Buldān, iii, 161-162.

holy places and while performing the Hajj and the 'umra in Mecca and Medina.

During the last twenty years of his life, a large number of students and disciples studied under him. They attended his study circles (ḥalaqāt), and successfully completed their education. Some of these students later became illustrious scholars, famous traditionists (muḥaddithūn), jurists (fuqahā'), transmitters (ruwāt) of al-Maghāzī, exegetes (mufasssirūn) and early writers in Islam.¹²² It is through these students that we have come to know about az-Zuhrī's knowledge, his reported traditions and his legal opinions. Similarly, the information regarding his life, his character and his academic career have reached us by this means.

From the time az-Zuhrī was appointed a tutor to Hishām's sons, he occupied himself in teaching the princes and the sons of the aristocrats on the one hand and the sons of the common people on the other. While imparting knowledge to these two classes of pupils, he made no distinction between them. Apart from teaching the sons of Hishām he held classes in the palace for other princes, their colleagues from amongst the sons of distinguished

122) The number of az-Zuhrī's well-known students reached 150. See Mizzī, ix, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī.'

personalities and many others. Among such pupils were Ibrāhīm b. al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik, who later became the caliph,¹²³ Muḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh (d. 152 A.H.) - az-Zuhrī's nephew¹²⁴ - 'Ubayd-Allāh b. Abī-Ziyād (d. 158 A.H.) - Hishām's brother-in-law¹²⁵ - and Shu'ayb b. Abī-Ḥamza (d. 162 A.H.)

After giving his lectures in the caliph's court az-Zuhrī used to return home to teach other students assembled there. Among such students were 'Uqayl b. Khālīd al-Aylī (d. 144 A.H.), Muḥammad b. al-Walīd az-Zubaydī (d. 148 A.H.), Ma'mar b. Rāshid (d. 153 A.H.), Yūnus b. Yazīd (d. 159 A.H.).

123) See Ṭab, vii, 295, 299 ff. He is the same Ibrāhīm b. al-Walīd who has been referred to in the statement of Ma'mar b. Rāshid saying: "I saw a man from amongst the Umayyads known as Ibrāhīm b. al-Walīd. He called on az-Zuhrī with a book which he presented to the latter...." See Dhahabī, v, 224.

124) See Mizzī, ix, under the rubric 'Muḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Muslim az-Zuhrī.'

125) I. Sa'd, VII, ii, 175.; Tahdh., vii, 13-14.

In addition to the classes he held in the palace and in his own house, he used to deliver general lectures in the Damascus mosque and other big mosques where Syrian and other students, attracted by the fame of his scholarship, used to assemble and join his study-circle. He often went to the outskirts of the town and to the countryside where he gave easy lessons on religion to simple villagers and farmers.¹²⁶ Through this social service, he tried to fight and eradicate illiteracy, not only from the cities but also from the villages and towns. This shows his deep concern for the spread of education and dissemination of knowledge.

Apart from his zealous pre-occupation with spreading knowledge and teaching in the Syrian towns and cities, az-Zuhrī used to undertake long arduous journeys to Hijāz during Hajj seasons, not only to perform the pilgrimage, but also to meet the scholars assembled in Mecca and Medina, to teach the Meccan and Medinan students and to give general lectures there. The scholars and the students of Mecca and Medina used to wait for him eagerly in order to consult him, to have discussions with him and to learn from him. Among the topics of discussion in these meetings used to be the 'ḥadīth', of which he was an eminent scholar. That he was a great scholar of ḥadīth

126) I. 'Asākir, xiv, 514.; Hilya, iii, 363.; Dhahabī, v, 150.; Bidāya, ix, 345.

is evident from the following report of Ibn-'Uyayna:
He says: "Az-Zuhrī once visited 'Amr b. Dīnār in Mecca.
On his return he commented: 'I have not seen a better
scholar of ḥadīth than this teacher (ash-shaykh).' 'Amr
b. Dīnār on his part said: 'I have seen no better scholar
of ḥadīth than az-Zuhrī'." ¹²⁷ Mālik also provides
testimony to the fact that az-Zuhrī was a great ḥadīth
scholar. He reports: "Ibn-Shihāb came to Medina and
entered into the 'council room' (bayt ad-dīwān) in the
company of Rabī'a. Both of them spent the whole afternoon
(al-'aṣr) in discussion. When they came out Ibn-Shihāb
said: 'I feel there is none like Rabī'a in Medina.' On
his own part, Rabī'a remarked: 'I don't think there is
anyone who possesses the store of knowledge possessed by
az-Zuhrī.' " ¹²⁸

127) A. Zur'a, v, 60a. Also see vi, 71.; Tahdh., ix,
448.; Nubalā', V, i, 98b. 'Amr b. Dīnār
(d. 126 A.H.) was a great Meccan scholar of his
time. He narrated the ḥadīth from az-Zuhrī. For
further details about 'Amr b. Dīnār, see I. Sa'd,
V, 353-354.

128) Dhahabī, v, 142. Rabī'a refers to Rabī'a b.
Abī-'Abd-ar-Raḥmān (d. 136 A.H.), also known as
'Rabī'at-ar-Ra'y'. He was one of the most popular
jurists of Medina of his time. For further details
about him, see Baghdād, viii, 420-427.

Az-Zuhrī was so great a scholar and had attained so much popularity that when he arrived in Mecca and Medina, the local scholars stopped delivering lectures on ḥadīth and waited for him to discharge this duty. Thus Mālik reports: "From the time Ibn-Shihāb entered Medina until he left, no one related traditions."¹²⁹ No wonder, therefore, that his houses in Mecca and Medina used to become the rendezvous of a large number of seekers after knowledge. Speaking of this crowd of az-Zuhrī's students, Mālik reports: "When az-Zuhrī came to us from Syria we used to flock at his door." According to another version: "We used to call on him in such a huge crowd that we fell on each other."¹³⁰

Az-Zuhrī's long and frequent visits to Mecca and Medina and his study circles in the Sacred Mosque (al-masjid al-ḥarām) attended by a huge crowd of students - the local Meccans and Medinans and others arriving from different cities - resulted in producing a large number of graduates. Out of these graduates emerged great scholars and teachers of religious sciences in each city of the Islamic world. Thus the renowned, distinguished Meccan and Medinan scholars like Mūsa b. 'Uqba (d. 141 A.H.), 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Umar (d. 147 A.H.).

129) Bidāya, ix, 343.

130) Mizzī, i, Introduction.; Fāsil, iv, 40a.; Tamhīd, i, 67.

Muḥammad b. Ishāq (d. 151 A.H.), Muḥammad b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Abī-Dhi'b (d. 159 A.H.), 'Abd-al-'Azīz al-Mājishūn (d. 164 A.H.), Mālīk b. Anas (d. 179 A.H.), Muslim b. Khālīd az-Zinjī (d. 180 A.H.), Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd (d. 183 A.H.) and Sufyān b. 'Uyayna (d. 198 A.H.), were all pupils of az-Zuhrī.¹³¹

During the course of teaching, az-Zuhrī realised that the dissemination of knowledge by oral means alone was not sufficient. In his opinion, the oral method of teaching was an impediment to further studies and research. He believed that it did not fulfil the student's desire to learn more and more. He noticed that among his pupils there were many students who, not being residents of Syria and Hijāz, were unable to come to him for various reasons. Some of them lived quite far from his town¹³² and their poor financial circumstances did not allow them to bear the travelling expenses from their own town to that of

131) See Mizzī, ix, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī'.

132) 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Umar reports: "Az-Zuhrī used to hold his study circle at ar-Ruṣafa. (When I wished to visit him) my mother did not allow me to go to him. In other words she disallowed my making a journey towards him." See A. Zur'a, vi, 68a.

az-Zuhrī.¹³³ Similarly, there were a few students who, after calling on him, could not stay with him for a long period of time.

Az-Zuhrī also noticed that many of his students attending his study circle and listening to his lectures were unable to memorise all that they had heard during the lesson and did not possess enough speed to record in black and white all the aḥādīth he dictated to them. So much valuable information was lost and a large number of his aḥādīth and legal opinions (āṙā') could not be preserved.

Having realised these disadvantages of oral teaching, az-Zuhrī decided to disseminate knowledge by means of writing as well. Thus he codified all available material on various religious subjects in the Kutub, the dafātīr, the ṭawāmīr, the fanādīq, the ajzā' and the nusakh.¹³⁴

133) When people asked Sufyān ath-Thawrī why he did not go to az-Zuhrī to hear the aḥādīth from him, he replied: "I have no money (to travel)." See Fāṣil, i, 16b.

134) See Imtiaz, 208 ff, 268 ff, 454 ff for full information regarding the meaning of these tools of writing and for a detailed account of the use of these tools by Muslim scholars in disseminating their knowledge and preserving the ḥadīth material. Also find there a valuable discussion about az-Zuhrī's role in writing and codification. Also see Abbott, 33 ff, 175 ff.

and made several copies of these written compilations.¹³⁵ Whenever his pupils called on him, he handed them over a kitāb, a daftar, a juz' or a nuskha so that they could memorise its contents and narrate them to others on his authority. Sometimes he lent out these manuscripts so that his students might copy the written material and return the original after copying. In such cases, he used to give permission to them to narrate on his authority without directly hearing from him. On other occasions, he asked his pupils to bring the copies they had made so that he might compare them with the original manuscript. These copies, after being compared, were returned to them with permission to relate on his authority. Very often, he allowed his trusted students to narrate on his authority without looking into the copies they had made from his manuscripts. This permission was given in good faith. He believed that they had copied his traditions correctly and with full understanding of the text.

Az-Zuhrī also sent on request the aḥādīth in written form to some of his students and other scholars living in distant lands like Egypt, 'Irāq, Yemen and other far off places.¹³⁶

135) This may very well explain az-Zuhrī's large collection of books, of which his wife was so jealous. See p. 71

136) See I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 193.; Bukhārī, i, 218, 227, iii, 478.

Apart from making educational tours, delivering lectures, holding classes wherever he could reach, and teaching both orally and by means of writing, az-Zuhrī used to persuade and encourage his students to pursue their studies despite unfavourable circumstances like poverty. He gave financial assistance to poor and needy students. Thus, Ziyād b. Sa'd is reported to have said: "I told az-Zuhrī that his traditions appealed to me very much, but I had no means of reaching his study circle and pursuing my studies there. Thereupon he replied: 'Follow me. I shall bear your expenses and narrate the aḥādīth to you.'" ¹³⁷ Very often, he invited these students to his house and served them with delicious food and drinks. Ma'mar b. Rāshid gives an eye-witness account of this practice of az-Zuhrī and says: "(Once) I called on az-Zuhrī and saw that he was serving his students and visitors with food." ¹³⁸ Similarly, Sa'īd b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz reports: "We used to call on az-Zuhrī at ar-Rāhib, where he served us with different kinds of food." ¹³⁹

These students used to remain his guests at night and he held night conversations with them. During these conversations he asked them to narrate to him the aḥādīth

137) I. 'Asākir, xiv, 514b.

138) A. Zur'a, vi, 68a.

139) A. Zur'a, vi, 68a.; Dhahabī, v, 150.; Tarājim, 73.

known to them. Thus 'Uqayl b. Khālīd reports: "I used to have night conversations (asmuru) with az-Zuhrī who served me with honey. Once when I dozed during the conversation he remarked: 'You are not like the expert night-conversationists (summār) of the Quraysh.'" ¹⁴⁰

Al-Layth b. Sa'd provides us with a similar report and says: "Az-Zuhrī was the most generous of all the persons known to me. He used to help financially everyone calling on him. When he had no money he even borrowed from others to help the needy. He used to entertain the people with 'ath-tharīd' (a kind of food) and honey. Unlike those who entertained their guests with wine, az-Zuhrī served his night-conversationists (summār) with honey mixed with water or milk and said: 'Drink, and narrate to us the traditions.' When any of them felt drowsy az-Zuhrī remarked: 'You are not like the night-conversationists of the Quraysh (who do not doze while conversing at night.)' ¹⁴¹ He was so hospitable to these pupils that he swore to refrain from talking to them for several days if they refused to accept his invitations and did not take the food and drinks served to them. Thus Mūsā b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz reports: "When any student refused to take the meals served by az-Zuhrī, he swore that he would not narrate to him ḥadīth for ten days." ¹⁴²

140) A. Zur'a, vi, 68b.

141) Bidāya, ix, 343.; Dhahabī, v, 137.

142) I. 'Asākir, 514b.

Muwaqqarī also reports: "We frequented az-Zuhrī's house for seven months. During our visits he used to say: 'One who does not eat (with me) should not come near me.' "143

The financial help, the hospitality, the encouragement and the affectionate attitude of az-Zuhrī towards his students, made him very popular and lovable in the eyes of the people. It was natural, therefore, that many people related stories of his generosity and bounteousness and some contemporary poets wrote panegyrics (qaṣā'id) extolling these extraordinary qualities of az-Zuhrī. To take an example, Fāyid b. Aqra wrote a panegyric about him which began, after the fashion of the old 'Arab poets, with erotic verses (ghazal). Praising the generosity of az-Zuhrī, he said:

"Leave this (composing of erotic verses) and praise
generous Muḥammad.

Speak of his virtues to all his friends.

If it should be asked: "Who is the generous one?"

Answer: "It is Muḥammad b. Shihāb."

The people of the cities know of his deeds.

They know of his generosity to the A'rāb

(bedouins, nomads). "144

143) Dhahabī, v, 142.; Al-Walīd b. Muḥammad al-Muwaqqarī (d. 182 A.H.) was one of the pupils of az-Zuhrī. See Tahdh., xi, 148.; Lubāb, iii, 270-271.

144) Bidāya, ix, 342.; Dhahabī, v, 147-148.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 499b.

Although his generosity and financial assistance to his students and followers were highly praised by the poets and other people, they became the cause of his heavy indebtedness.¹⁴⁵ Despite the fact that the Umayyad rulers gave him enormous grants, which he spent in dissemination of knowledge and help of the poor students, he needed more and more funds to fulfil his ambition to meet the entire expenses of the students and to provide them with the best amenities of life. In order to fulfil this desire, he borrowed large sums of money from his friends and rich colleagues. When he found himself unable to repay these loans, he approached the Umayyad caliphs or the princes with a request to make repayments on his behalf. The caliphs and the princes granted his request and repaid his loans. The caliph Hishām, who was known for his niggardliness, on several occasions advised him to refrain from taking loans. Az-Zuhrī listened to his advice and promised to follow it. But soon afterwards, when he found his students in need of food, drink or clothing, or even cash, he could not keep the promise he had made with the caliph and took loans to help these students. It is not surprising, therefore, that at the time of his death it was discovered that he owed a large sum of money. When the caliph Hishām came to know of it, he repaid all these

145) Dhahabī, v, 138, 141, 142, 150.; Tarājim, 70, 73.

debts on his behalf.¹⁴⁶

146) Sa'īd b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz is reported to have said: "Az-Zuhrī (once) said to Hishām, '(Please) repay my loan.' The caliph asked: 'How much is it?' He replied: 'Eighteen thousand dīnārs.' (Hearing this), the caliph remarked: 'I apprehend that if I make repayment of these, you will again borrow.' Az-Zuhrī replied: 'The Prophet (peace be upon him) said that 'the believer is not bitten twice from the same hole.'" In other words he gave an assurance that he would not take loans again. Hishām, thereupon, paid the debt on az-Zuhrī's behalf. Sa'īd adds: "At the time of az-Zuhrī's death, he owed the same amount which was repaid by Hishām."

See Dhahabī, v, 141.

In another report Sa'īd b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz says: "Hishām repaid a loan of seven thousand dīnārs on behalf of az-Zuhrī."

See Dhahabī, v, 138.; Tarājim, 70.; Bidāya, ix, 343-344.

Az-Zuhrī employed all his resources and energy in spreading knowledge by every possible means available in his time. By the time he reached the age of seventy, he realised that he had now fulfilled his responsibility for imparting knowledge and teaching his students. He felt that the time had now come to retire from academic life and take a rest. By reason of his old age, he no longer felt fit to hold his study circle and deliver lectures. He, therefore, retired from teaching, withdrew from all academic activities and spent most of his time at home. But his followers and students did not allow him to take a rest. They asked him to relate the traditions even during this period. When he refused to do so, they resorted to such trickery and requested him in such a persuasive manner that he had no option but to relate a few traditions orally or to hand them over written aḥādīth to be narrated in his name.

Al-Ḥasan b. 'Umāra (d. 153 A.H.) in the following report describes how he made az-Zuhrī relate aḥādīth for him. He reports: "After az-Zuhrī had retired from academic life, I called on him and said: 'Would you care to relate to me?' He replied: 'Don't you know that I have stopped narrating aḥādīth?' I said: 'Either you relate to me or I relate to you.' He replied: 'You relate to me then.' I thereupon said: 'Ḥakam b. 'Uṭayba related to me on the authority of Yaḥyā b. al-Jazzār who said: 'I heard 'Alī saying: 'Before Allāh asks the

ignorant to learn, He asks the learned to teach.'

Hearing this az-Zuhrī related to me forty traditions."¹⁴⁷

In another report Sufyān ath-Thawrī (d. 161 A.H.) says: "I came to az-Zuhrī (to hear the ḥadīth from him) but he refused to relate it to me. I thereupon remarked: 'Would you have been pleased to receive the same treatment from your own teachers when you called on them?' Az-Zuhrī (understood what I meant by this and) asked me to wait. He then entered into his library, where he picked up a book and handed it over to me, saying: 'Take it and relate (its traditions) on my authority.....' "¹⁴⁸

(c) His animosity towards al-Walīd b. Yazīd

Yazīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik (101-105 A.H.), in his will, had nominated his brother Hishām as successor to the caliphate and his son al-Walīd - a young boy - as the crown-prince and successor to Hishām. On Yazīd's death,

147) Adhkiyā', 98. Also see Dhahabī, v, 149, with the omission of the passage: 'Then he related to me forty traditions.'

148) Tarājim, 69-70.; Dhahabī, v, 149.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī". But Sufyān was not satisfied with this and therefore related no tradition from this book. Instead, he asked from az-Zuhrī to narrate the traditions orally. cf. Dhahabī, v, 149.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".

when Hishām ascended the throne, he executed the will of his brother and made al-Walīd b. Yazīd the heir-apparent to the throne.¹⁴⁹

Al-Walīd grew up under the patronage and guardianship of Hishām. He remained respectable in the eyes of the caliph, his courtiers and the princes during his childhood. But in his youth, when he started leading an irreligious and immoral life, he lost his reputation and was looked on with contempt. His debauchery and his lewd, licentious life both inside and outside the palace became the topic of public discussion. People talked of his loose character in private and public gatherings. Hishām, desirous of saving al-Walīd's honour and reputation, first advised him to improve his conduct. Then, to exert further pressure on him, he threatened to deprive him of his right and privilege of becoming the heir-apparent. Again, he sent him to Mecca and Medina to perform the Hajj (pilgrimage) and to visit holy places in order that he might change himself and lead a moral life. But these visits had no effect on him. Instead of abiding by the moral teachings of Islām he behaved in a most contemptuous and indecent manner during these visits. This character of al-Walīd, witnessed by the visitors and the pilgrims, provided the enemies of the

149) Tab., vii, 209.; Aghā., vii, 3-4.

Umayyads with ample material for their animosity and their propaganda against the Umayyad family and their rulers.¹⁵⁰ The caliph Hishām was naturally much grieved, for al-Walīd's behaviour had damaged the reputation of the ruling Umayyad family and had impaired the sanctity and prestige of the caliphate. He thought many times of depriving al-Walīd of his right to become the crown-prince. But he could not do this because of his love and respect for his brother, Yazīd. In recognition of the favours his brother had bestowed upon him by nominating him as caliph, he executed the will of his brother and retained al-Walīd as his heir-apparent.¹⁵¹

But az-Zuhrī viewed al-Walīd's loose character from a purely religious angle and took serious notice of it. He anticipated in it a danger to religion and morals. He believed that, as the leading religious scholar, it was incumbent upon him to point out and criticise openly the immoral and irreligious acts of al-Walīd. What he disliked most, and what troubled him very much, was the possibility of al-Walīd's succession to the throne after Hishām's death. He was, all in all, against al-Walīd and used to make adverse remarks about him. He criticised him severely before the caliph Hishām and the princes, and

150) Tab., vii, 209-215.; Aghā., ii, 239-240.; vii, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 12 ff, 15, 64, 70.; 'Iqd, v, 215 ff.

151) Tab., vii, 209 ff.; Aghā., vii, 3 ff.

told them of what people said about al-Walīd's lewd, licentious life. He persuaded the caliph to deprive him of his right to succeed, for in his opinion his succession to the caliphate was unlawful. Abū-z-Zinād provides us with a report to this effect, and says: "Az-Zuhrī always impugned and talked ill of al-Walīd in front of Hishām. He apprised the caliph of such indecent activities of al-Walīd as were normally not told. He even advised him to deprive him of his right to succeed. But Hishām could not do so....."¹⁵²

Al-Walīd's informers and some of his friends apprised him of az-Zuhrī's criticism of him. They also told him that az-Zuhrī had persuaded Hishām to deprive him of the caliphate. Al-Walīd, who detested az-Zuhrī, became his worst enemy and waited for some suitable opportunity to get hold of him and take revenge. Thus, whenever he happened to see az-Zuhrī he threatened to kill him. And it is quite possible that had there been no protection from Hishām he would have easily killed him. Az-Zuhrī, however, cared little for his threats and used to say: "Allāh would not enable you, O transgressor, to get hold of me."¹⁵³ The enmity between the two grew more and more.

152) Dhahabī, v, 140, 174.; Bidāya, x, 3.

153) I. 'Asākir, xiv, 516b.; Bidāya, x, 3.

Though az-Zuhrī was certain that Hishām would not deprive al-Walīd of his succession to the throne, he went on criticising the latter. He believed that what he was doing was his religious duty - a duty which should be carried out at all costs. Thus, instead of improving his relationship with al-Walīd, he severed it by criticising him openly. He knew that on coming to power al-Walīd would deal with him severely. He, therefore, decided that in the event of Hishām's death, following which al-Walīd would succeed him, he would flee to Bilād ar-Rūm. But, fortunately, he himself died seven months before Hishām's death,¹⁵⁴ and al-Walīd's wish to avenge himself remained unfulfilled. Though al-Walīd could not punish az-Zuhrī physically, yet he showed his malice against him verbally. During his reign, whenever he mentioned az-Zuhrī he called him 'az-Zuhrī, the great transgressor' as he himself was called 'al-Walīd, the transgressor' by az-Zuhrī.

That both az-Zuhrī and al-Walīd called each other 'al-fāsiq' (the transgressor) is evident from the following report: Abū-z-Zinād reports: "(Once) while I was sitting with Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik and az-Zuhrī, both of them began to talk about al-Walīd and impugned him severely. I myself did not take part in this discussion. Meanwhile, al-Walīd came and asked

154) Aghā., vii, 12.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 515a.;
Nubalā', V, i, 101b.

permission to see Hishām. Permission was granted and al-Walīd in an angry mood entered and sat near Hishām. Soon thereafter, he stood up and left. Later, when Hishām died and al-Walīd ascended the throne, he asked the governor of Medina to send me to him. The governor complied with the caliph's order and I was sent to the capital. When I called on the caliph he received me warmly and asked: 'How are you, O Ibn-Dhakwān?' After asking in a most affectionate manner about my welfare, he said: 'Do you remember the day when the squint-eyed (al-aḥwal) i.e. Hishām, and the transgressor az-Zuhrī (al-fāsiq az-Zuhrī) were sitting censuring me?' I replied: 'Yes, I remember that, but I did not join them in blaming or criticising you.' He said: 'You are right' and added, 'Do you know who informed me about this?' I replied: 'No.' Whereupon he said, '(It was) the attendant who was standing behind Hishām.' Then he remarked: 'By God, had the transgressor az-Zuhrī (al-fāsiq az-Zuhrī) been alive, I would have killed him....' According to another version, al-Walīd said: 'I had determined to kill az-Zuhrī, if Allāh would have enabled me to catch hold of him.' "155

155) Ṭab., vii, 253.; Aghā., vii, 11.; Iqd, v, 219.

Al-Walīd retaliated upon all those who used to criticise him during Hishām's reign. He inflicted severe punishments on them and even killed some of them. See Aghā., i, 415-416.; Ṭab., vii, 232.

(d) Death of az-Zuhrī

Az-Zuhrī lived a long, active life. During this period, he spent all his energies and tapped all sources to serve the religion in which he believed. He devoted his entire life to the service of knowledge and scholarship, which he loved from the depth of his heart. He was, to a very great extent, successful in the field of his activities. When he reached the seventy-second year of his life, he felt that death was approaching soon. He, therefore, sang the following couplets time and again:

"Youth has passed away, O Jumān,

and it shall never return.

All that has happened is as if it had never been.

And I am grasping my staff O Jumān.

It is sad. It is the beginning of the end." 156

On Tuesday, the 17th Ramaḍān, 124 A.H., he breathed his last in his village Adāmā. In his will, he requested that he should be buried by the side of the road

156) Bidāya, ix, 345.

so that every passer-by could bless him.¹⁵⁷

After his death, when his pupil al-Awzā'ī passed by his grave, he paid the following tribute to his teacher with utmost veneration:

"O grave! How much knowledge and forbearance (ḥilm)
rest within you!

O grave! How much knowledge and generosity do
you contain!

And how many narrations (riwāyāt) and rulings (aḥkām)
have you gathered!" 158

157) Ma'ārif, 163.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 495a.; I. Khay, ii, 532.; Murūj, iii, 215.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī'.; Dhahabī, v, 152.

The date of az-Zuhrī's death given here is the date mentioned by the majority of the reports occurring in the above mentioned sources. There is, however, no unanimity on the date of his death. According to one report he died in 123 A.H.; while another report gives the date of his death as 125 A.H. But these two reports do not appear to be authentic.

158) I. 'Asākir, xiv, 515a.; Bidāya, ix, 344.

PART II

THE SCHOLARSHIP OF AZ-ZUHRĪ IN QUR'ĀNIC
SCIENCES AND TRADITION (ḤADĪTH AND SUNNA)

CHAPTER THREE

AZ-ZUHRĪ'S SCHOLARSHIP IN QUR'ĀNIC SCIENCES

1. The Science of Readings ('Ilm al-Qirā'āt)

(i) Az-Zuhrī, The Reader

Az-Zuhrī committed to memory the Qur'ān in his early childhood,¹ and when he was a student in Medina, he studied the science of readings along with the acquisition of other religious sciences. The most prominent of all his teachers in the science of readings was 'Abd-ar-Rahmān b. Hurmuz al-A'raj, the copyist and the notable Qur'ān-reader of Medina during his period.² During the early years of his stay in Damascus he became acquainted with Anas b. Mālik, the Companion and servant of the Prophet. Az-Zuhrī recited in his presence the entire Qur'ān from memory,³ and heard from him a large number of traditions including those which are related to the Prophet's way of reading and the ways of the Companions who were noted for their readings. Each of these Companions is stated to have had either a special characteristic reading, or an exclusive muṣḥaf known by his own name, such as 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib, Mu'ādh b. Jabal, Ubayy b. Ka'b, 'Abd-Allāh b.

1) See p. 8.

2) Tadhk, i, 97.; Nuzha, 8.; Fihrist, 39.

3) Ghāya, ii, 263.; Miftāḥ, i, 357-359.

Mas'ūd, Zayd b. Thābit, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās and others.⁴

In this way his knowledge of the science of readings increased, and he became familiar with its history, its variations and the causes for the variant manners of readings. Thus he became one of the prominent Qur'ān readers of his period.⁵ He very enthusiastically engaged in the teaching of the Qur'ān and its seven readings (al-Qirā'āt as-Sab'a) to his students and disciples.

In the course of his lectures to his students, he narrated to them the traditions relating to the forms of readings with the chains of transmitters as he had heard them from his teachers. Abū-'Alī b. Yazīd says that he heard from az-Zuhrī, who said that he heard from Anas b. Mālik, who said that the Prophet used to read: "wa-l-'aynu bi-l-'ayni" instead of "wa-l-'ayna bi-l-'ayni."⁶

Sufyān b. Ḥusayn said that he heard from az-Zuhrī who heard from 'Amr b. 'Uthmān who heard from Usāma b. Zayd who said that the Prophet recited: "fitnatun bi-l-arḍi" instead of "fitnatun fi-l-arḍi."⁷ Ma'mar b. Rāshid narrated that az-Zuhrī narrated to me on the authority of Abū-Salama who said that Jābir narrated: "I heard the

4) Maṣā., 53-54, 83-87.

5) Itqān, i, 204.; Nashr, i, 8.

6) Musta., ii, 236; See Qur'ān, v:45.

7) Talkh.; ii, 240; see Qur'ān, viii:73

messenger of Allah reciting: 'wa-r-rujzu fa-hjur' instead of 'wa-r-rujza fa-hjur.'"⁸ It is also narrated of Ma'mar that he said that az-Zuhrī narrated from Ibn-'Umar who said that 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb used to read: "fa-mḍū" instead of "fa-s'aw."⁹

Shu'ayb b. Abī-Ḥamza said that az-Zuhrī narrated to me on the authority of 'Urwa who said that 'Ā'isha used to read: "kudhibū" instead of "kudhdhibū."¹⁰

In order to encourage his students to study the Qur'ān and its readings, it was the habit of az-Zuhrī to increasingly discourse upon the Qur'ān with those who accompanied him on his journeys. His disciple Shu'ayb b. Abī-Ḥamza says: "I accompanied az-Zuhrī from Damascus to Mecca, and we were studying the Qur'ān during the course of our journey."¹¹

8) Musta., ii, 251; See Qur'ān, ixxiv:5.

9) Tafsīr, 96a.; Muṣa., iii, 207; Ṭab. Taf., xxviii, 60.; See Qur'ān, xxxii:9.

10) I. Ka. Ta., iv, 347-349; and see Qur'ān, xii:110. This reading by 'Ā'isha was also the reading of Ibn-Mas'ūd, see Tafsīr, 43a. It is permitted to read Qur'ān according to all the varied forms described above.

11) Dhahabī, vii, 150.

As a result of his enthusiastic devotion to the teaching of the Qur'ān, and its readings to his students, some of them attained very high proficiency and excelled in this science. After his death, they became the leaders (a'imma) of the science of readings.

The most prominent of all his pupils in this field were Nāfi' b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān al-Laythī (d. 169 A.H.), the leader of the people of Medina in Qur'ānic readings,¹² and 'Uthmān b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān al-Waqqāṣī, who narrated from his teacher, az-Zuhrī, the Qur'ānic readings with their chains of transmitters (asānīd). 'Uthmān followed the way of az-Zuhrī in the reading of the Qur'ān¹³ - the way which az-Zuhrī is stated to have received from Anas b. Mālik; and it is said that Anas received it from the Prophet.¹⁴

The importance of az-Zuhrī as a reader manifests very clearly in his views regarding varied readings, and in his criticisms of some forms of readings that were popular during his period. His views gave rise to long controversies among the scholars of readings. Many of his views are considered to be important, fundamental

12) Bukh. Ka., iv, 87.; Miftāḥ, i, 366-367.; Qurra', 333-334.

13) Ghāya, ii, 263.

14) Nashr, i, 8.

principles of readings, and were followed by the readers who came after him.

The most important views of az-Zuhrī in this respect may be summarised as follows:-

(a) The basmala is a verse that forms a part of each sūra of the Qur'ān except sūra 9, so it must be recited in the beginning of each sūra of the Qur'ān. It is reported that Ma'mar said: "Az-Zuhrī used to begin the recitation of each sūra of the Qur'ān with the basmala, and he used to say that it is a verse that forms a part of each sūra of the Book of God. The people have forsaken its recitation, which is an act that is not permitted."¹⁵ Many of the readers follow this view of az-Zuhrī and state that it is obligatory to recite the basmala at the beginning of each sūra of the Qur'ān.¹⁶

(b) The other important opinion expressed by az-Zuhrī was that precedence (taqdīm) and antecedence (ta'khīr) is permitted in the Qur'ān. It is reported of Abū-Uways that he stated: "I asked az-Zuhrī about the question of precedence and antecedence in ḥadīth. He said: 'This is permitted in the Qur'ān. Why may it not be permitted in ḥadīth?' "¹⁷

15) Muṣa., ii, 91.

16) Dānī, 17-18.; Qu. Ta., i, 93-96.

17) Dhahabī.

The conception of precedence and antecedence in the Qur'ān implies that it is permitted, while reading the Qur'ān, to make one word antecede or precede the other in some verses. For example, in verse 11 of sūra 9, the verb in the active voice may precede one in the passive voice. Alternatively, the active may antecede the passive. Thus the verse may be recited as:

"Fa-yaqtulūna wa-yuqtalūn", or as: "Fa-yuqtalūna wa-yaqtulūn". As a matter of fact, there are only three verses in the Qur'ān in which some of the words are permitted to be preceded and anteceded.¹⁸

(c) It is also a view of az-Zuhrī, that the Qur'ān should be read with tafkhīm because it was revealed with tafkhīm. He quoted Ibn-'Abbās, who is reported to have stated that the Qur'ān was revealed with tafkhīm.¹⁹ The term tafkhīm in Qur'ānic reading means that the reader must pronounce the words clearly and with a strong accent, and he should vowel the unvowelled letters (al-ḥurūf as-sākina) in the middle of the words either by damma or fatha in order to pronounce them very clearly.²⁰ For example, the words like: "al-jum'a" "'udhuran" "nudhuran" "aṣ-ṣaḍfayni" which occur in some of the verses of the

18) Dānī, 93.

19) Itqān, i, 261.

20) Itqān, i, 256, 261.

Qur'ān,²¹ and other similar words which have consonant letters in the middle, will be recited with tafkhīm as:
"al-jumu'a" "'udhuran" "nudhuran" "aṣ-ṣaḍafayni"
 etc.²²

It appears to me that az-Zuhrī, in this respect, was influenced by the dialect of his tribe, namely Quraysh. It is well known among the scholars of Arabic dialects that tafkhīm was one of the elements of the dialect of Quraysh.²³

(d) It was also the opinion of az-Zuhrī that verse 4 of sūra 1 must be read as: "māliki-yawmi-d-dīn"; and any one who reads it as: "maliki-yawmi-d-dīn" has committed an error, because neither the Prophet nor his Companions read in this newly-invented manner (aṭ-ṭarīqa al-muḥdatha). According to az-Zuhrī, it was Marwān b. al-Ḥakam who introduced this innovation in reading, when he was the governor of Medina during the caliphate of Mu'āwiya b. Abī-Sufyān (41-53 A.H.). Ṭalḥa narrated that az-Zuhrī stated: "Verily, the Prophet, Abū-Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, az-Zubayr and Ubayy used to read it as: "māliki-yawmi-d-dīn."²⁴ Abū-Miṭraf reported that az-Zuhrī said: "Verily the first to introduce the innovation of reading of

21) See Qur'ān, xxxii:9.; Lxxii:6.

22) Iṭḥāf, 430.; Qu. Ta., xi, 61.

23) Itqān, i, 262.

24) Maṣā., 92-93.; Durr, i, 14.

"maliki-yawmi-d-dīn" was Marwān b. al-Ḥakam. It is narrated from Ma'mar that az-Zuhrī said: "Verily, the first to read in that manner "maliki" was Marwān."²⁵

Because of this, az-Zuhrī was harshly criticised by some of the scholars of the science of readings, who said that it was an accepted fact among them that the Prophet had read in both ways, namely "māliki" and "maliki".²⁶ They explained that az-Zuhrī's statement was due to his ignorance of the ḥadīth in which this reading is mentioned on the authority of the Prophet.²⁷

(e) One of the most significant views of az-Zuhrī in the field of the science of readings was that the variations that exist in the seven readings are only due to differences in dialects and grammar, which do not in any way imply any variations or differences in law (aḥkām). In all the different readings, the laws of the Qur'ān essentially remain as one.²⁸

(f) According to az-Zuhrī, it is not obligatory to imitate and follow only one reading among these seven forms of readings. The reader has the right to choose

25) Maṣā., 93.

26) Maṣā., 92-94.

27) I. Ka. Ta., i, 40.

28) Muṣa., xi, 219.; Bukhārī, iii, 394.; Ṭab. Taf., i, 11.

for himself the reading which he finds to be distinct and easy for him, or to use more than one reading; and in the course of his reading to move from one reading to another. He has the right to choose from all the seven readings one reading for himself. In this, az-Zuhrī differs from the scholars of readings who make it obligatory for the reader of the Qur'ān to adhere to one reading, insisting that he must not move from one reading to another.²⁹ It appears to me that az-Zuhrī has based his opinion on the tradition (ḥadīth), which he has reported on the authority of 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr in which it was stated that the Prophet said: "The Qur'ān was revealed in seven readings. Read from them what you find easier to you."³⁰ The phrase "what is easier" (mā tayassar) indicates that it is not obligatory to follow only one reading. Az-Zuhrī, following this opinion, compiled a reading which he selected from all the seven readings.

By formulating the above viewpoints and by his reading which we shall discuss, az-Zuhrī contributed to the development of the science of readings. He rendered a noble service to this branch of Qur'ānic sciences by engaging in the teaching of readings and by inspiring

29) Ṭab. Taf., i, 17.

30) Muṣa., xi, 218-219.; Bukhārī, iii, 394, 405; iv, 333.; Muslim, 315-316.; Tirmidhī, i, 273; Musnad, i, 274, 283-284.

his disciples to specialise and excel in it. They became the leaders of the people in this field, and the main authorities for those who followed them. His narration of the traditions which deal with readings with their chains of transmitters is also a valuable contribution.

(ii) Az-Zuhrī's Reading

After the death of the Prophet, each of the seven readings in which the Qur'ān was revealed was attributed to one of the Companions. In this way each reading was associated with the name of the Companion to whom it was attributed, and known as his reading. Thus, it was referred to as the reading of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, the reading of 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib, the reading of Sālim, the freed slave (mawlā) of Abū-Ḥudhayfa, the reading of Ubayy b. Ka'b, the reading of Abd-Allāh b. Mas'ūd and the reading of Zayd b. Thābit.³¹

It appears to me that the attribution of the seven readings to these Companions, and not to others who were also following the same readings, may be due to the fact that they preserved, mastered and excelled in these seven readings better than the other Companions.

The Qur'ān's readers among the Successors received

31) See Maṣā., 53 ff.; Mukhta., 5, 10 ff.

the seven readings either directly from those Companions to whom they were attributed or from those who had received the seven readings from them. Some of these readers were following either one or more than one reading.³² Others, without following either one or more than one of these readings, selected from them various elements, or parts, which they combined to form new readings. These new readings were attributed to them. For example, a new reading was denoted as the reading of Abū-al-‘Āliya, the reading of Sa‘īd b. Jubayr, the reading of as-Sulamī, the reading of Mujāhid, the reading of al-A‘mash etc.³³

32) Tab. Taf., i, 18.

33) Dawudī, i, 172-173.; 181-182; ii, 305-307.

From the readings of the prominent readers among the Successors and the followers of the Successors, Ibn-Mujāhid (d. 324 A.H.) the famous scholar of readings, chose seven readings: v.z., the readings of Ibn-‘Āmir (d. 118 A.H.), Ibn-Kathīr (d. 130 A.H.), ‘Āṣim (d. 127 A.H.), Ibn-al-‘Alā’ (d. 154 A.H.), Ḥamza (d. 156 A.H.), Nāfi‘, the student of az-Zuhrī, (d. 169 A.H.) and al-Kisā’ī (d. 189 A.H.). (See Dānī, 4-7). These readings are known as the seven readings of Ibn-Mujāhid and attained fame among the scholars of readings who came after Ibn-Mujāhid. (See Ghaya, i, 139-142.; Baghdād, vii, 144-148;

(footnote continues)

(footnote no. 33 continued)

Subkī, ii, 102-103.; Fihrist, 31). The most important fact to be noted here is that these seven readings of Ibn-Mujāhid are not the original seven readings in which the Qur'ān was revealed and which were indicated by the traditions of the Prophet. (See Musa., xi, 218-219.; Musnad, i, 274, 283, 284.; Bukhārī, iii, 394, 405., iv, 333.; Tab. Taf., i, 11-18): because each of the seven readings of Ibn-Mujāhid consists of sections from more than one reading from the original seven readings. (See Dānī, 8-16.; Nashr, 3 ff.; Ithāf, 5 ff.; Mukhta, 3 ff.)

(footnote no. 33 ends).

Az-Zuhrī the reader compiled a reading that was known by his name and became equally popular among the scholars of readings and exegesis.³⁴

It seems that his aim in the compilation of his reading was to introduce a reading that was easy to pronounce, and easy to understand. In order to achieve this aim, he selected from the seven readings what he thought was easy to pronounce and easy to understand. For instance, he selected from the reading of 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib, "zilālin" "saylun" "la-ḥdā".³⁵ He selected from the reading of Ibn-Mas'ūd "in" "al-ghayṭi" "tuyammimū".³⁶ He selected from the reading of Ubayy b. Ka'b "yasalūna" "yadhbaḥūna" "mawwilan".³⁷ From Mu'ādh b. Jabal's reading he selected "tulāqūhu" "dhurriyyātihi" etc.³⁸

Here are some parts of az-Zuhrī's reading collected from the books of readings and exegesis. So that the distinction between his reading and the reading that one finds in the copies of the Qur'ān today may be known, I

34) Nashr, i, 8.; Itqān, i, 204.

35) I. Khāla., 159.

36) I. Khāla., 28, 191.

37) Zama., i, 56.

38) I. Khāla., 23.

have placed the current reading alongside the reading of az-Zuhrī.

Sūra	Verse	Current Reading	Az-Zuhrī's Reading	
2	: 2	<u>fīhi-hudan</u>	<u>fīhu-hudan</u>	39
	6	<u>ā-andhartahum</u>	<u>andhartahum</u>	40
	14	<u>mustahzi'ūn</u>	<u>mustahziyūn</u>	
	38	<u>fa-lā-khawfun</u>	<u>fa-lā-khawfa</u>	
	40	<u>isrā'īla</u>	<u>isrāyīla</u>	41
	40	<u>ūfi</u>	<u>awaffi</u>	42
	49	<u>yudhabbiḥūna</u>	<u>yadhbaḥūna</u>	43
	50	<u>faraqnā</u>	<u>farraqnā</u>	44
	102	<u>hārūta</u>	<u>hārūtu</u>	
	102	<u>mārūta</u>	<u>mārūtu</u>	
	102	<u>al-mar'i</u>	<u>al-marri</u>	45
	102	<u>nunsihā</u>	<u>nansāhā</u>	
			<u>tunsāhā</u>	46

39) Qu. Ta., i, 160.

40) A.J., 117, 332.

41) Qu. Ta., i, 329-331.

42) Qu. Ta., i, 332.

43) Zama., i, 56.

44) Qu. Ta., i, 387.

45) I. Khāla., 8.

46) Mansūkh, 3. Az-Zuhrī has two readings in respect of this word.

Sūra	Verse	Current Reading	Az-Zuhrī's Reading	
	142	<u>li-na'lama</u>	<u>li-ya'lama</u>	
	142	<u>la-ra'ūfun</u>	<u>la-rūfun</u>	
	196	<u>nusukin</u>	<u>nuskin</u>	47
	228	<u>qurū'in</u>	<u>quruwwin</u>	48
	367	<u>tayammamū</u>	<u>tuyammimū</u>	49
	367	<u>tughmiḍū</u>	<u>taghmiḍū</u>	50
3 :	13	<u>fi'atun</u>	<u>fiyatin</u>	
	49	<u>taddakhirūna</u>	<u>tadkharūna</u>	
	103	<u>tabyaḍḍu</u>	<u>tabyāḍḍu</u>	
	103	<u>taswaddu</u>	<u>taswāddu</u>	51
	143	<u>talqawhu</u>	<u>tulāqūhu</u>	52
	156	<u>ghuzzan</u>	<u>ghuzan</u>	
4 :	4	<u>ṣaduqātihinna</u>	<u>ṣadqātihinna</u>	
	43	<u>al-ghā'iṭi</u>	<u>al-ghayṭi</u>	
	101	<u>taqṣurū</u>	<u>tuqaṣṣirū</u>	53

- 47) I. Khāla., 10, 12.
 48) Zama., i, 108.
 49) A.J., 122.
 50) Zama., i, 127.; and I. Khāla., 16.
 51) I. Khāla., 19, 20, 22.
 52) I. Khāla., 23.; and see Zama., i, 174.
 53) I. Khāla., 24, 26, 28.; and see Zama., i, 189, 208, 225.

Sūra	Verse	Current Reading	Az-Zuhrī's Reading
5	: 94	<u>li-ya'lama</u>	<u>li-yu'lama</u>
6	: 9	<u>wa-la-labasna</u>	<u>wa-la-labbasna</u>
	9	<u>mā-yalbisūn</u>	<u>mā-yulabbisūn</u>
	14	<u>fāṭiri</u>	<u>faṭara</u>
	14	<u>wa-l-arḍi</u>	<u>wa-l-arḍa</u>
	139	<u>khāliṣatun</u>	<u>khāliṣatan</u>
7	: 18	<u>madh'ūman</u>	<u>madhūman</u>
	22	<u>yakhṣifāni</u>	<u>yukhṣifāni</u>
	37	<u>saw'ātihimā</u>	<u>sawātihimā</u>
	165	<u>ba'īsin</u>	<u>baysin</u>
	202	<u>yuqṣirūna</u>	<u>yuqaṣṣirūna</u>
9	: 37	<u>li-yuwāṭi'ū</u>	<u>li-yuwaṭṭiyū</u>
	37	<u>an-nasī'u</u>	<u>an-nasiyyu</u>
11	: 111	<u>lammā</u>	<u>lamman</u>
12	: 52	<u>li-ya'lama annī</u>	<u>li-yu'lama innī</u> 54
13	: 43	<u>'indahu</u>	<u>'indihi</u> 55

54) Zama., i, 287, 324, 325, 395, 457.;

I. Khāla., 35, 36, 41, 42, 47, 48, 61, 64.

55) This reading is narrated from az-Zuhrī but aṭ-Ṭabarī says that the chain of transmitters of this narration is not sound, see Ṭab. Taf., xiii, 103.

Sūra	Verse	Current Reading	Az-Zuhrī's Reading	
15	: 15	<u>sukkirat</u>	<u>sakarat</u>	56
	44	<u>juz'un</u>	<u>juzzun</u>	57
18	: 58	<u>maw'ilan</u>	<u>mawwilan</u>	58
	57	<u>yanqadda</u>	<u>yanqādda</u>	59
20	: 15	<u>li-dhikrī</u>	<u>li-dhikrā</u>	60
	66	<u>yukhayyalu</u>	<u>tukhayyalu</u>	61
29	: 3	<u>fa-la-ya'lamanna</u>	<u>fa-la-yu'limanna</u>	62
	3	<u>wa-la-ya'lamanna</u>	<u>wa-la-yu'limanna</u>	
	19	<u>yubdi'u</u>	<u>yabda'u</u>	
30	: 51	<u>muṣfarran</u>	<u>muṣfārran</u>	
32	: 7	<u>wa-bada'a</u>	<u>wa-badā</u>	
	10	<u>ḍalalnā</u>	<u>ḍalilnā</u>	

- 56) I. Khāla., 70.; Zama., i, 514.
57) Zama., i, 516.; Nashr, i, 406.
58) A.J., 188.
59) I. Khāla., 81, and see Zama., i, 519.
60) Tab. Taf., xvi, 98.
61) I. Khāla., 88.; Zama.; ii, 29.
62) Zama., ii, 174.; I. Khāla., 114.

Sūra	Verse	Current Reading	Az-Zuhrī's Reading	
33	: 14	<u>su'ilū</u>	<u>suyilū</u>	
	20	<u>yas'aluna</u>	<u>yasalūna</u>	63
34	: 21	<u>li-na'lama</u>	<u>li-yu'lama</u>	64
35	: 27	<u>judadun</u>	<u>jadadun</u>	
			<u>jududun</u>	65
	33	<u>jannātu</u>	<u>jannatu</u>	66
36	: 41	<u>dhurriyyatahum</u>	<u>dhurriyyātihim</u>	67
43	: 19	<u>satuktabu</u>	<u>sayaktubu</u>	68
49	: 9	<u>tafī'a</u>	<u>tafiyya</u>	
58	: 7	<u>akthara</u>	<u>akbara</u>	69
	13	<u>a-'ashfaqtum</u>	<u>ashfaqtum</u>	70

63) A.J., 157, 335, 336, 348.

64) I. Khāla., 122.

65) Az-Zuhrī has two readings in respect of this verse.
See Zama., ii, 243.; I. Khāla., 123.

66) I. Khāla., 124.; Zama., ii, 244.

67) A.J., 159.

68) I. Khāla., 135.

69) I. Khāla., 143, 153.

70) Mansūkh, 7a.

Sūra	Verse	Current Reading	Az-Zuhrī's Reading	
60	: 11	<u>fa-‘āqabtum</u>	<u>fa-‘aqabtum</u>	71
67	: 19	<u>mā-yumsikuhunna</u>	<u>mā-yumassikuhunna</u>	
68	: 14	<u>an-kāna</u>	<u>in-kāna</u>	72
70	: 1	<u>sā’ilun</u>	<u>saylun</u>	73
71	: 29	<u>li-wālidayya</u>	<u>li-waladayya</u>	74
72	: 28	<u>li-ya‘lama</u>	<u>li-yu‘lama</u>	75
74	: 35	<u>la-‘ihdā</u>	<u>la-ḥdā</u>	76
75	: 10	<u>al-mafarru</u>	<u>al-mafirru</u>	77
77	: 41	<u>zulalin</u>	<u>zilālin</u>	78
80	: 37	<u>yughnīhi</u>	<u>ya’nīhi</u>	79

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- 71) A.J., 101, and see Zama., ii, 453.
72) I. Khāla., 159., Zama., ii, 480.
73) A.J., 191, 337.; Zama., ii, 487.
74) A.J., 105, and see Zama., ii, 493.
75) I. Khāla., 163.
76) A.J., 191, 337.
77) I. Khāla., 165.
78) A.J., 266.
79) I. Khāla., 169.

2. The Science of Qur'ānic Exegesis

(i) Az-Zuhrī, the Exegetist

Al-Layth b. Sa'd says that when az-Zuhrī speaks about Qur'ānic exegesis, one who listens to him feels that he is a specialist and a versatile scholar in that field who had devoted all his time in studying and mastering it.⁸⁰ In fact, al-Layth has not indulged in exaggeration in his praise for his teacher az-Zuhrī. For the copious and rich material that is narrated on the authority of az-Zuhrī in relation to the science of Qur'ānic exegesis indicates very clearly his deep knowledge of this subject. The narrations of az-Zuhrī which have come down to us, in respect of Qur'ānic exegesis, accords him a very noble position among the most illustrious exegetists of the younger Successors. e.g.: Qatāda b. Di'āma as-Sadūsī (d. 117 A.H.), Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraḏī (d. 118 A.H.), 'Aṭā' b. Abī-Muslim al-Khurāsānī (d. 125 A.H.), Zayd b. Aslam al-'Adawī (d. 136 A.H.) and Sulaymān b. Mahrān al-A'mash (d. 148 A.H.).⁸¹

80) Ḥilya, iii, 361.; Dhahabī, v, 137.; Tadhk., i, 109.

81) I. Sa'd, vi, 238.; vii, ii, 1-3.; Ma'ārif, 159.; Dhahabī, iv, 199.; Jarḥ, 111, 334.; Tadhk., i, 122, 134, 154.; Dāwudī, i, 176, 379.; Tahdh., iii, 396.; iv, 222.; vii, 212.

During the course of my reading and study of these narrations, I asked myself repeatedly whether az-Zuhrī had compiled an exegesis of the Qur'ān as had those fellow-scholars mentioned above. I feel that it is relevant here to answer this question.

During this early phase of Islāmic history, az-Zuhrī is noted for the interest he showed in writing and compilation. He compiled many books, the names of some of which are known to us: Kitāb Ansāb Muḍar,⁸² Kitāb as-Sīra,⁸³ Kitāb al-Maghāzī,⁸⁴ Kitāb Mashāhid an-Nabī,⁸⁵ and Kitāb Asnān al-Khulafā'.⁸⁶ Two of his books, Tanzīl al-Qur'ān and Mansūkh al-Qur'ān, have come down to us in one manuscript dated (653 A.H.). Az-Zuhrī's compilation of these two books leads me to suppose that he intended to write a book on the exegesis of the Qur'ān - a desire which was never realised as he had many things on his hands. Therefore, we can say that he did not compile an exegesis on the Qur'ān. In spite of this fact, what he narrated and dictated to his students in relation to the knowledge pertaining to Qur'ānic exegesis is sufficient to compile a short exegesis of almost the entire

82) Mizzī, x, under the rubric 'az-Zuhrī'.; Aghā., xix, 59.

83) Aghā., xix, 59.; Kashf, ii, 1746-1747.

84) I'lān, 159.

85) Ibid.

86) Ṭab., v, 499.

Qur'ān, and it compensates for the lack of the exegesis which he was thinking of compiling.

Az-Zuhrī engaged in the teaching of Qur'ānic exegesis to his students with ardent devotion and enthusiasm. During the course of his lessons and lectures on Qur'ānic exegesis, many serious scholarly discussions took place between him and his students. He used to reply with a deep scholarly spirit to many of the questions raised by his students. At times, his replies embodied within them a wide variety of materials pertaining to the verses that were in question, as the legal rules (al-aḥkām), sīra, maghāzī, linguistic structures, occasions of revelation (asbāb an-nuzūl), the traditions of the Prophet and the sayings of the Companions (al-aḥādīth al-mawqūfa). He very ably employed his knowledge of jurisprudence, sīra, maghāzī, ḥadīth and language in his interpretation of the Qur'ānic verses about which he was questioned. His disciples transmitted his answers and views on matters related to Qur'ānic exegesis as they heard them from him.

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn-Ishāq that, when he asked az-Zuhrī about the verses 82, 83 and 84 of sūra 5, he answered: "I have heard on innumerable occasions from our scholars that these verses were revealed in connection with an-Najāshī and his companions....."⁸⁷

87) Ṭab. Taf., vii, 5.

It is narrated on the authority of 'Ubayd-Allāh al-Jazarī, that he said: "I questioned az-Zuhrī about the Qur'ānic verse: 'The alms are only for the poor (al-fuqarā') and the needy (al-masākīn).....'⁸⁸ He replied: 'What is intended by the term (fuqarā') is those who neither possess anything nor do they ask people for charity. The term (masākīn) denotes those who do not possess anything, and do request charity from people.'⁸⁹

Ghālib b. 'Abd-Allāh narrated: "I asked Ibn-Shihāb about verse 96 of sūra 3 and also about the distinction between the words Bakka and Makka. He answered: "Bakka is the name assigned only to the place in which there is al-Ka'ba and the mosque that surrounds it, namely al-Masjid al-Ḥarām, and Makka is the name of the entire city in which al-Masjid al-Ḥarām is to be found."⁹⁰

It is narrated from Hushaym b. Bushayr al-Wāsiṭī, that he said: "When I was in the presence of az-Zuhrī, he was questioned about the verse, '..... then send such gifts as can be obtained with ease.'⁹¹ He replied: 'Ibn-'Abbās stated: 'What could be obtained easily from the goats,' and Ibn-'Umar said: 'What could be obtained easily from camels and cows.'⁹²

88) See Qur'ān, ix:60.

89) Ṭab. Taf., x, 96.

90) Ṭab. Taf., iv, 7.

91) See Qur'ān, 11:196.

92) Ṭab. Taf., ii, 121-122.

Yūnus b. Yazīd narrated: "While I was present and listening, Ibn-Shihāb was asked about verse 52 of sūra 22 and he replied: 'Abū-Bakr b. 'Abd-ar-Rahmān narrated to me that the messenger of Allāh said:.....' "93

It is narrated from Ibn-Ishāq that he said: "We asked az-Zuhrī about verse 11 of sūra 60 and he replied:". Commenting upon this verse, az-Zuhrī gave a lengthy reply, embracing exegetic, legal and historical matters as this verse refers to an event related to sīra and fiqh.⁹⁴

It is narrated from 'Uqayl b. Khālīd that he said that Ibn-Shihāb was questioned in his presence about verse 24 of sūra 4. He said: "We see that verily God has forbidden in this verse....."⁹⁵ Az-Zuhrī interpreted this verse in a long reply on the basis of personal opinion (ra'y) as appears from the phrase "we see" (narā).

From his replies to the questions related to Qur'ānic exegesis, and from his narrations and the opinions which he expressed in the course of his lectures, his students benefitted immensely. Thus influenced by his views and

93) Ṭab. Taf., xvii, 121.

94) Ṭab. Taf., xxviii, 47.

95) Tafsīr, 18a.; Ṭab. Taf., v, 5.

encouraged by his eagerness, enthusiasm and devotion in his teaching of Qur'ānic exegesis, some of his students became distinguished scholars in that field. They compiled commentaries in which they gathered all his narrations and viewpoints which they had preserved. Among his students who attained fame in the field of Qur'ānic exegesis along with other religious sciences, we may mention the names of 'Abd-al-Malik b. Jurayj (d. 150 A.H.), Ma'mar b. Rāshid (d. 153 A.H.), 'Abd-ar-Raḥman b. 'Amr al-Awzā'i (d. 157 A.H.), Mālīk b. Anas (d. 179 A.H.), Hushaym b. Bushayr (d. 183 A.H.) and Sufyān b. 'Uyayna (d. 198 A.H.).⁹⁶

Of the commentaries of his students, the exegesis of Ma'mar b. Rāshid has come down to us.⁹⁷ On reading it, it appeared to me that almost half of what it contains is, in fact, an exposition of the narrations

96) Dāwudī, i, 190, 352.; ii, 299, 352.; Kattā., 41.; Fihrist, 51-52, 316.; Madārik, i, 90, 206.

97) This exegesis was narrated from Ma'mar by his student, 'Abd-ar-Razzāq b. Hammām aṣ-Ṣan'ānī (211 A.H.), who had added to it very little material of his own. Due to this fact, this exegesis is attributed to him and known as: Tafsīr 'Abd-ar-Razzāq. This is wrong in my opinion; and an injustice committed against the rightful author, Ma'mar b. Rāshid. Aṭ-Ṭabarī has transmitted the entire Tafsīr of Ma'mar b. Rāshid verbally in his Tafsīr.

and viewpoints of az-Zuhrī in matters of Qur'ānic exegesis as received by Ma'mar from az-Zuhrī without any comments or additions. The exegesis of aṭ-Ṭabarī contains substantial material in the form of narrations from the students of az-Zuhrī, in relation to what he has narrated or stated in matters of Qur'ānic exegesis. In many places aṭ-Ṭabarī had given preference to the interpretations of az-Zuhrī over the interpretations of other prominent exegetists like Ibn-'Abbās, Mujāhid b. Jabr, Sa'īd b. Jubayr, 'Ikrima and Qatāda.⁹⁸

There are many narrations and viewpoints of az-Zuhrī in the exegeses of Ibn-Abī-Ḥātim (d. 327 A.H.), al-Qurṭubī (d. 671 A.H.), Ibn-Kathīr (d. 774 A.H.) and as-Suyūṭī (d. 911 A.H.).⁹⁹ All these indicate his importance as an exegetist of the Qur'ān and the deep influence which he exerted in this field.

98) Ṭab. Taf., ii, 69.; iv, 7, 43-44.; v, 5.;

vi, 28; xi, 11.; xv, 85-86, 164-165.; xxvi, 82.

99) See nos. 102, 103, 104 ff in this chapter.

(ii) Az-Zuhrī's Method in Qur'ānic Exegesis

Az-Zuhrī adopted the following ways of interpreting the Qur'ān.

(a) The interpretation of the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān itself

Az-Zuhrī's adoption of this way of interpretation of the Qur'ān is demonstrated clearly in his interpretation of the verses known as (mujmala), and the verses known as (mufaṣṣala). For example, the Qur'ānic verse "And with him are the keys of the invisible, none but he knoweth them"¹⁰⁰ belongs to the category of the (mujmal) because God mentions in it the keys of the invisible (mafātiḥu-l-ghaybi), the knowledge of which is his exclusive possession, without stating what is implied by the phrase "the keys of the invisible." The Qur'ānic verse which states: "Lo, Allāh! With him is knowledge of the hour, he sendeth down the rain, and knoweth that which is in the womb, and no soul knoweth what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul knoweth in what land it will die; lo! Allāh is knower, aware"¹⁰¹ belongs to the category of (mufaṣṣal), because God elaborates in detail what he has stated in summary in the previous verse. Az-Zuhrī in his interpretation of the first verse only mentions the second verse after it; because he believes

100) Qur'ān, vi:59.

101) Qur'ān, xxxi:34.

that the mentioning of that verse alone after the first verse, without any additions or comments, is sufficient for the interpretation of the first verse and for the understanding of its implications.¹⁰²

(b) The interpretation of the Qur'ān by the ḥadīth

This way of interpretation is widely employed in his exegesis. The fact that he had committed to memory most of the traditions of the Prophet, both in relation to Qur'ānic exegesis and other related matters, helped him to a great extent in this task. So long as there existed a tradition which he felt to be sufficient for the interpretation of a verse which he intended to interpret, he would adhere to that tradition and interpret it in the light of it. If he found a saying of a Companion (ḥadīth mawqūf) which contradicted the interpretation based on the tradition (al-ḥadīth al-marfū'), he would reject the saying of the Companion. As a result of his interpretation of the Qur'ān by the ḥadīth, we find in his commentary a unique collection of traditions related to Qur'ānic exegesis.¹⁰³

102) See I. Ka. Taf., iii, 260.

103) Tafsīr, 4b, 9b, 12b, 14b, 20b, 23a, 24a, 26a, 29b, 68a, 71b, 95b, 96b, 100a.;
Tab. Taf., viii, 151.; ix, 29.; xii, 50.;
xv, 168-169.; xvii, 101.; xxiii, 96.;
xxvi, 111.; xxx, 209.;
Bukhārī, iii, 210, 213, 217, 223, 227, 229, 237, 239.

(c) The interpretation of the Qur'ān by the sayings of the Companions (al-aḥādīth al-mawqūfa).

He appears to have employed this way of interpretation in many verses of the Qur'ān, because he used to memorise the sayings of the Companions in relation to Qur'ānic exegesis in the same way as he used to commit to memory the traditions of the Prophet. When the sayings of the Companions agreed with each other, he would accept them. When he found a difference of opinion and conflicting views among them, he would choose from these different view-points what he thought to be the correct and best exposition. We notice that mostly he is inclined towards the sayings of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib, 'Abd-Allāh b. Mas'ūd, 'Ā'isha and Ibn-'Abbās.¹⁰⁴ In relation to the sayings of the Companions in this respect, the major part of his material is derived from Ibn-'Abbās. This seems natural because of the prominent place occupied by Ibn-'Abbās in the field of Qur'ānic exegesis. Az-Zuhrī derived the sayings of Ibn-'Abbās from his teacher 'Ubayd-Allāh b.

104) Tafsīr, 9b, 13a, 16b, 51a, 63a, 72a, 96b, 104b;
Tab. Taf., ii, 28, 127, 140, 141, 280, 281.;
v, 178, 179.; vii, 10.; xviii, 84, 86.;
xxiv, 66.; xxviii, 91-92.; xxx, 27.

‘Abd-Allāh, one of the closest disciples of Ibn-‘Abbās, and from some of his other teachers.¹⁰⁵

- (d) The interpretation of the Qur’ān by the sayings of the older Successors (al-aḥādīth al-maqtū’a).

The older Successors who have been quoted by az-Zuhrī as authorities in his exegesis, were in fact among his teachers ‘Ubayd-Allāh b. ‘Abd-Allāh, Sa‘īd b. al-Musayyib, ‘Urwa b. az-Zubayr, al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad and Sālim b. ‘Abd-Allāh.¹⁰⁶ There were other older Successors prominent in the field of Qur’ānic exegesis, for example, Sa‘īd b. Jubayr, Mujāhid b. Jabr, ‘Ikrima al-Barbarī, etc. He neither referred to their sayings nor did he quote them as authorities in his exegesis, except ‘Alī b. ‘Abd-Allāh b. ‘Abbās, whom he once heard interpreting to the caliph ‘Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān, a Qur’ānic verse about which he had questioned him. On this occasion, az-Zuhrī memorised what ‘Alī said and quoted him as an authority in his interpretation of that particular verse.¹⁰⁷

105) Tafsīr, 5b, 10a, 17a, 32a.;

Ṭab. Taf., ii, 197, 281.; iii, 55.; vi, 160.;
v, 26.; x, 131.; xxi, 11.; xxviii, 91.

106) Tafsīr, 12a, 18a, 24a, 37b, 61b.;

Ṭab. Taf., ii, 237, 240, 245.; v, 34.; vii, 39, 41.;
xi, 19.; xii, 104.; xv, 71.; xviii, 113.

107) Ṭab. Taf., xvii, 129.

It appears to me that az-Zuhrī's failure to have recourse to the sayings of these scholars is a great loss and an act of negligence which an exegetist of his stature could not afford to commit: for these scholars were more famous in the field of Qur'ānic exegesis, and far more devoted to its cause, than any of the teachers of az-Zuhrī. Furthermore, they had unique exegeses to their credit, which in many ways surpassed the exegeses of his teachers.

(e) The interpretation of the Qur'ān by personal opinion.

This is the last way adopted by az-Zuhrī in his interpretation of the Qur'ān. It seems that he had recourse to it, when he could not find either in the traditions, or in the sayings of the Companions, or in the sayings of his teachers, an interpretation for a verse or verses which he sought to interpret. He explains his inability to obtain this information by saying: "We have not heard any sunna in relation to this verse either from the Prophet or any other leading scholar of men (a'immat an-nās), so that I may mention it."¹⁰⁸ When he interprets a verse by his personal opinion, he says in the beginning of his exposition: "We see" (narā) and then proceeds to state the interpretation he holds in respect of it.¹⁰⁹ In his exegesis, there are a large

108) Tab. Taf., ii, 343; vii, 65.

109) Tab. Taf., v, 5.; xiv, 5, 78.; Tafsīr, 75b.

number of verses which he has interpreted in the light of his personal opinion;¹¹⁰ and by doing so, he has added a wealth of profitable information to the Qur'ānic exegesis. Although, at times, he resorted to the interpretation according to his personal opinion in the absence of a tradition, or a saying of a Companion or of one of his teachers, at other times he completely withheld himself from interpreting some of the verses of the Qur'ān according to his personal opinion. Ma'mar said: "I mentioned to az-Zuhrī about the saying of God 'The thunder hymneth his praise' and sought from him the explanation of the word thunder (ar-ra'd). He Said: 'God knows best.' "¹¹¹

He had completely refrained from interpreting the letters (al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭa'a) that are found in the beginning of some sūras, such as: "alif-lām-mīm", "alif-lām-rā", "alif-lām-mīm-ṣād", "kāf-hā-yā-'ayn-ṣād", "ṣād", "ḥāmīm", "qāf", "nūn", etc.¹¹² It seems that he

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- 110) Tafsīr, 1b, 2a, 3b, 7a, 13a, 17a, 20b, 34b, 38b, 59a, 61, 63b, 64, 69a, 89b, 95b, 98a.;
Tab. Taf., i, 77, 368.; iii, 69, 237, 240, 274, 277, 307, 313, 315.; iv, 142.; xi, 88.; xviii, 3, 48.; xxv, 35.; xxvi, 65, 66.; xxviii, 18, 19, 44.
- 111) See Qur'ān, xiii:13.; and Tafsīr, 43b.
- 112) See Qur'an, ii:1.; iii:1.; vii:1.; x:1.; xi:1.; xii:1.; xiv:1.; xix:1.; xx:1.; xxxviii:1.; xL:1.; xLi:1.; xLii:1, 2.; L:1.; Lxviii:1.

has not interpreted them because the Prophet and his Companions have not interpreted them. Moreover, there is no room in them for an interpretation based on personal opinion (ra'y), because as ash-Sha'bī had said: "Every scripture (kitāb) has its secret, and the secret of this Qur'ān is in the beginning of the suras,"¹¹³ implying thereby the letters that are found in the beginning of some suras (fawātiḥu ba'di as-suwar).

Az-Zuhrī also did not interpret the ambiguous verses and traditions (al-āyāt wa-l-aḥādīth al-mutashābihāt) which are concerned with the person and attributes of God (dhāt Allāh wa-ṣifātih) such as: the hand of God, the face of God, the eye of God, the anger of God, the satisfaction of God, the wonder of God, the laughing of God, the elevation of God ('uluwwu Allāh), the nearness of God and the vision of God by the believers in the hereafter.¹¹⁴ When his students questioned him about the interpretation of these verses and traditions, he used to say: "Let these verses and traditions pass as they came"¹¹⁵ which means that we should not ask about

113) Itqān, iii, 21.

114) See Qur'ān, ii:115.; vi:18.; xLviii:6.; xiii:5.; Lxxxix:22.; ii:16., 186.; xx:5.; vi:52.; xxxvi:71.; Lvii:29.; xx:39.; Lii:48.

115) A. Zur'a, ix, 199a.

their interpretation, but rather understand them as they came down to us without any interpretation (ta'wīl). He also used to say to them, whenever he was questioned about them: "The knowledge is from God and the transmission (al-balāgh) of it is from the Prophet and the acceptance of it is for us."¹¹⁶ This means that it is of obligation for us to believe those verses and traditions with conviction without any attempt to interpret what has been stated in them with regard to the attributes of God. Az-Zuhrī's students followed the stand taken by their teacher in regard to the ambiguous verses and traditions; and when they attained to the status of scholar, they never attempted to interpret them. They used to reply to those who questioned them in the same way as az-Zuhrī did, saying: "The knowledge is from God....."¹¹⁷

Az-Zuhrī held a very strong opinion against al-isrā'īliyyāt, and never allowed the Qur'ān to be interpreted on the basis of them. According to him, the exegetists must be satisfied and content with the Prophet's and the Companions' interpretations of the stories of the Prophets (qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā') which are mentioned in the Qur'ān. He narrated some of the traditions and āthār which speak in very strong terms about the interpretation of the Qur'ān in the light of al-isrā'īliyyāt. Az-Zuhrī said: "Ḥafṣa, the wife of the

116) Dhahabī, v, 144.; Sam'ānī .

117) Burhān, ii, 78.; Itqān, iii, 12-13.

Prophet, brought a shoulder bone (katif) in which some-
things related to the story of Yūsuf (Josef) were written,
and read it in the presence of the Prophet; upon which the
Prophet's face changed and he became angry."¹¹⁸ He also
stated that Ibn-‘Abbās said: "How can you question the
people of the Book about any matter, when God has informed
you that they have tampered with the scripture of God and
changed it? They have written a scripture with their own
hands; and then declared: "It is from God." Will not
the Book of God which he revealed to his messenger, and
which is in your hands in all its purity without any
interpolation, suffice you? Will not what has come down
to you in regard to knowledge from God suffice you,
instead of questioning from them?"¹¹⁹ For this reason,
we do not find in az-Zuhrī's exegesis any traces of
either isra'īliyyāt or any other myths and legends. For
every Qur'ānic story of the prophets which he sought to
interpret, he completely depended upon the traditions of
the Prophet and the sayings of the Companions.¹²⁰

118) Muṣa, vi, 113-114.; xi, 110.

119) Muṣa., vi, 110., xi, 110.; Bukharī, iv, 441.

120) Tafsīr, 30b, 59a.; Tab. Taf., vii, 151.; xi, 27.;
xii, 50, 130.; xv, 164-165, 168-169.; xxiii, 96,
107-108.; I. Ka. Taf., ii, 406-407, 418-419.;
iii, 221.; v, 171.

With regard to the interpretation of the legal verses (āyāt al-aḥkām)¹²¹ we find az-Zuhrī mentioning all that is related to them. He mentions the occasions of revelation (asbāb an-nuzūl) and what has occurred in relation to them regarding abrogation (an-naskh). He explains the way to practice the laws that are found in these verses along with the opinions and the fatāwā of the Companions with regard to them. At times, he derives from the basic fundamental laws which are in some of these verses, subsidiary laws that branch out from them.¹²²

In his interpretation of the verses related to sīra and maghāzī,¹²³ he utilizes his vast knowledge of these subjects to a great extent. A verse may contain just a small allusion of a very minor nature to an incident related to sīra, or it may consist of a very

121) See Qur'ān, II:228, 229, 231, 233, 234, 236, 237, 241.; iv:24, 25, 137, 138.; v:1.; vii:204.

122) Tafsīr, 3a, 7a, 17a, 18a, 21b.; Tab. Taf., ii, 249, 250, 251, 253, 263-267, 274, 284, 289, 307, 313, 315.; v, 3-5, 178-179, 183, 190.; vi, 28.; vii, 64-65.

123) See Qur'ān, iii:121, 139-141, 152-155.; viii:5-12, 17, 36.; ix:25-26, 41-52, 95, 102, 118.; xvii:1.; xxiv:12-22.; xlviii:25-28.; Lix:2-7.

short phrase about one of the battles of the Prophet. In interpreting this kind of verse, we find az-Zuhrī recording incidents and battles from the beginning to the end, indicating in detail all that is related to them, including their consequences, results and influences.¹²⁴ He specifically mentions the persons, places and the incidents which are indicated in some of these verses in an allusive way. Thus, for example, according to him what is intended by the people of the Book (Ahl al-Kitāb) in verse 109 of sūra 11 is Ka'b b. al-Ashraf.¹²⁵ The person referred to in verse 19 of sūra 8 is Abū-Jahl.¹²⁶ The mosque which is mentioned in verse 108 of sūra 9 is Masjid Qubā' which is also known as Masjid Banī-'Amr b. 'Awf.¹²⁷ The cave which is mentioned in verse 40 of sūra 9 is the cave of Thawr mountain in which the Prophet and Abū-Bakr were in hiding for three days during their emigration from Mecca to Medina.¹²⁸

- 124) Tafsīr, 14a, 33a, 35a, 36a, 37b, 49a, 50b, 72a, 88b, 96a.; Tab. Taf., iv, 63, 78, 87.; vi, 35-36, 108-109.; ix, 116-117, 129-130, 149-150.; x, 7, 8, 63, 84, 90-91.; xi, 3, 11, 37-40.; xv, 5, 11-12.; xviii, 63-66.; xxvi, 55, 58, 61, 62.; xxviii, 18, 19, 20, 21.
- 125) Tafsīr, 16a.; Tab. Taf., i, 368.; I. Ka. Taf., i, 220.
- 126) Tafsīr, 33a.; Tab. Taf., ix, 129.
- 127) Tab. Taf., xi, 19.; I. Ka. Taf., iv, 152.
- 128) Tafsīr, 36a.; Tab. Taf., x, 84.

What is intended by the phrase "near victory before hand" (al-fath al-Qarīb) in verse 27 of sūra 48 is the treaty of Hudaibiya; then az-Zuhrī proceeds to explain why this treaty was a victory beforehand for the Prophet and his Companions.¹²⁹

As az-Zuhrī employed his extensive knowledge of fiqh, sīra and maghāzī for the interpretation of the Qur'ān, so also he utilized his knowledge of genealogy (ansāb) for the interpretation of some verses.¹³⁰ He also made use of his philological knowledge in explaining many of the strange phrases (al-mufradāt al-gharība) of the Qur'ān. I have enumerated more than fifty strange phrases used in the Qur'ān which he has explained in his exegesis, with all their philological implications and bringing forth their meanings very clearly.¹³¹

129) Tab. Taf., xxvi, 62.

130) Tab. Taf., xiv, 45.

131) Tafsīr, 32a, 34b, 51a, 59a, 61b, 63b, 91a, 102a, 103a.; Tab. Taf., iv, 7, 78, 142.; v, 5.; vi, 126.; vii, 39-41.; x, 46, 96-101.; xv, 71, 165.; xvii, 35-36, 101.; xviii, 3, 48, 86, 121.; xxi, 11.; xxv, 25.; xxvi, 65-66, 109, 111.; xxviii, 21.; xxix, 80, 115.; xxx, 189.; I. Ka. Taf., ii, 180, 185.; vi, 7, 108, 518, 520.

In his interpretation of some of the verses of the Qur'ān, he criticises some of the sects that were in existence during his time.¹³²

Az-Zuhrī's method in the field of Qur'ānic exegesis indicates that he was an eminent exegetist of great authority. His exegesis represents one of the best examples of at-tafsīr bi-l-ma'thūr.

Az-Zuhrī's use of his vast knowledge of various sciences in his interpretation of the Qur'ān has accorded to his exegesis an honoured position as high among commentators as among traditionists, jurists, philologists and the scholars of sīra and maghāzī.

(iii) Az-Zuhrī's work Tanzīl al-Qur'ān

Some of the scholars of Qur'ānic exegesis among the Companions and the Successors such as Ibn-'Abbās, Mujāhid b. Jabr, 'Ikrima al-Barbarī, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Jābir b. Zayd and Qatāda b. Di'āma were engaged in the study of the history of the revelation of the Qur'ān's sūras. On the basis of their studies, each one of these scholars arranged the Meccan and Medinan sūras according to the conclusions which they had reached as to the chronology of their revelation.¹³³

132) Ta'wīl, 329.; 'Iqd, ii, 202.; Nubalā', V, i, 101b.; Musta., ii, 473.

133) Fihrist, 25-26.; Qu. Taf., i, 61.; Itqān, i, 22-27, 72-73.

Just as this subject attracted the attention of these scholars, so also it attracted the attention of az-Zuhrī: and he compiled a book in which he arranged the Meccan and Medinan sūras of the Qur'ān in the order which it seemed to him that they had been revealed. Az-Zuhrī's work was transmitted by his student al-Walīd b. Muḥammad al-Muwaqqarī al-Umawī (d. 182 A.H.) who has also narrated another work of his teacher. Both works have come down to us in a single manuscript written in (653 A.H.), as we have already stated above.¹³⁴

Az-Zuhrī commences his work on the sūras of the Qur'ān by saying: "This is the book of revelation of the Qur'ān (Tanzīl al-Qur'ān) and what God has willed to make known to men (an-nās) regarding what was revealed from the Qur'ān in Mecca and what was revealed from it in Medina. The first to be revealed in Mecca was sūratu-igra', followed by sūratu-nūn, then sūratu-l-muzzammil, then sūratu-l-muddaththir.¹³⁵ In this way he continues to mention all the Meccan sūras one after the other in that order, in which it seemed to him that they had been revealed. After mentioning the Meccan sūras, he concludes with the statement: "The number of sūras that were revealed in Mecca is 85."¹³⁶ Then he says:

134) See p. 162.

135) Tanzīl, 7b.

136) Tanzīl, 8a.

"The number of sūras which God revealed in Medina is 29."¹³⁷

Then he starts mentioning the Medinan sūras in the order in which he believed them to have been revealed, saying:

"The first to be revealed by God in Medina was sūratu-l-fātiḥa, then sūratu-l-baqara."¹³⁸ He continues to

mention the Medinan sūras in their order; and when he

reaches the last one, sūra at-tawba, he says: "It is the

last sūra to be revealed in the Qur'ān. When a sūra was

revealed in Mecca, it was written down in Mecca and

recognized as a Meccan sūra. When it was revealed in

Medina it was written down in Medina and recognized as a

Medinan sūra. The last verse to be revealed in the Qur'ān

was the saying of God: "There hath come unto you a

messenger, (one) of yourselves: it grieves him that ye

should perish: Ardently anxious is he over you: to the

Believers is he most kind and merciful. But if they turn

away (O! Muḥammad) say: 'Allāh sufficeth me. There is no

God save He. In Him have I put my trust. He is the Lord

of the glorious Throne.' " With this, the book comes to

an end.¹³⁹

137) Tanzīl, 8a.

138) Tanzīl, 8a.

139) Tanzīl, 8a.; The verse which az-Zuhrī stated to be the last verse that was revealed in the Qur'ān, in fact, consists of two verses and not one verse.

See Qur'ān, ix:128, 129.

One of the noteworthy features in az-Zuhrī's arrangement of the sūras of the Qur'ān is that he considers sūra al-fātiḥa to be the first sūra to have been revealed to the Prophet in Medina. There is in fact a great deal of controversy among the early and later exegetists about the revelation of this sūra. While we find that the majority of them hold the view that sūra al-fātiḥa was one of the earliest sūras that were revealed in Mecca, we find others holding the view that it was revealed in Medina: or that it was revealed twice; once in Mecca and once in Medina.¹⁴⁰

When one compares the arrangement of the sūras by Ibn-'Abbās¹⁴¹ with that of az-Zuhrī, one finds that there is general agreement between both in relation to all the sūras except sūra al-fātiḥa, which Ibn-'Abbās considered to be a Meccan sūra revealed to the Prophet before his migration to Medina,¹⁴² while az-Zuhrī considered it to be a Medinan sūra. They differed also in the arrangement of the seven Meccan sūras which are between sūras 75 and 37. Thus, while Ibn-'Abbās arranged them in the following order: 75, 104, 77, 50, 90, 86, 54, 38, 37,¹⁴³ az-Zuhrī classifies them according to the following order: 75, 77, 50, 104, 54, 90, 86, 38, 37.¹⁴⁴

140) I. Ka. Taf., i, 21 ff.; Qu. Taf., i, 115 ff.; Itqān, i, 30-31, 38.

141) See the arrangement of Ibn-'Abbās for the sūras of the Qur'ān in Itqān, i, 26-27.

142) Qu. Taf., i, 115.; I. Ka. Taf., i, 21.

143) Itqān, i, 27.

144) Tanzīl, 8a.

It would be beneficial to mention here the number of the Meccan and Medinan sūras as arranged by az-Zuhrī in his book Tanzīl al-Qur'ān.

(a) Meccan Sūras

96, 68, 73, 74, 111, 81, 87, 92, 89, 93, 94, 100, 103, 108, 102, 107, 109, 105, 113, 114, 112, 53, 80, 97, 91, 85, 95, 106, 101, 75, 77, 50, 104, 54, 90, 86, 38, 7, 72, 36, 25, 35, 19, 20, 56, 26, 27, 28, 17, 10, 11, 12, 15, 6, 37, 31, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 51,¹⁴⁵ 88, 18, 16, 71, 14, 21, 23, 32, 52, 67, 69, 71, 78, 79, 82, 84, 30, 29, 83.¹⁴⁶

(b) Medinan Sūras

1, 2, 8, 3, 33, 60, 4, 99, 57, 47, 13, 55, 76, 65, 98, 59, 110, 24, 22, 63, 58, 49, 66, 62, 64, 61, 48, 5, 9.¹⁴⁷

145) These three sūras are missing from Tanzīl-al-Qur'ān.

We have made this arrangement for them depending on the arrangement of Ibn-'Abbās and others for the sūras. There is no difference of opinion among them that these three sūras were revealed in Mecca in this order between sūras 44 and 88. See Fihrist, 25-26.; Itqān, i, 25 ff.

146) Tanzīl, 7b, 8a.

147) Tanzīl, 8a.

(iv) Az-Zuhrī's work Mansūkh al-Qur'ān

The knowledge of those Qur'ānic rules (al-aḥkām al-Qur'āniyya) which are still binding and applicable and those which are not applicable, completely depends upon the knowledge of the abrogative verses and the abrogated one (al-āyāt an-nāsikha wa-l-āyāt al-mansūkha).

It seems that it was the realization of the learned Companions of the importance of the knowledge of this kind of verse which led 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Ubayy b. Ka'b, Ibn-Mas'ūd, 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib and Ibn-'Abbās to assign an important place in their speeches and lectures to the exposition of these verses and the teaching of them to the people.¹⁴⁸ It is said that 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib wrote in his muṣḥaf the abrogative verses and the abrogated one in such a manner that either he wrote them separately from the other verses or in such a way that they might be distinguished from other Qur'ānic verses. He did this in order both to emphasise their importance, and the importance of the acquisition of knowledge of them. Ibn-Ashtah narrated in his book al-Maṣāḥif that Ibn-Sīrīn said: "'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib

148) See Muṣa., vii, 315.; ix, 50.; Musnad, i, 29, 47.; Bukhārī, iv, 304, 305-306.; Muslim, iii, 107.; I. Ka. Taf., vi, 380.; Itqān, iii, 59, 72-77.

wrote in his muṣḥaf the verses of an-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh. With the desire of obtaining a copy in order to see what he had written, I sent a letter to Medina, but I did not succeed in obtaining what I desired."¹⁴⁹ If what Ibn-Ashtah stated is correct, then 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib must be considered to be the first person to lay the foundation for the compilation of an-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh in the Qur'ān. Ibn-'Abbās, who is considered to be the master of Qur'ānic exegesis, appears to have paid a great deal of attention to the verses of an-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh in his exegesis and to have given a full exposition on the laws that were subjected to abrogation in the Qur'ān.¹⁵⁰ His disciples: Sa'īd b. Jubayr, Mujāhid b. Jabr and others who compiled works on the exegesis of the Qur'ān,¹⁵¹ followed in his footsteps and included in their exegeses the information which they derived from him in particular, and from other learned Companions in general, regarding an-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh in the Qur'ān with their own

149) Itqān, i, 166.

150) See e.g. Muṣa., iv, 269.; Bukhārī, iii, 211-212, 224.; Ṭab. Taf., i, 378.; I. Ka. Taf., i, 227, 302, 437-438.; Durr, i, 289, 309.

151) See Jarḥ, III, i, 332.; Fihrist, 33-34.; Dāwudī, i, 147, 172-173.; ii, 305-307.

individual observations and opinions regarding them.¹⁵²

In spite of the eagerness and enthusiasm shown by the learned Companions and the older Successors in matters related to the abrogation (an-naskh) in the Qur'ān, there is no evidence that any of them compiled an independent work on this subject.

During the period of the younger Successors, two of the prominent scholars among them, namely az-Zuhrī and Qatāda realised the importance of this subject, and the complexities arising from it. They felt that the scholars and the students of Qur'ānic exegesis and jurisprudence were in great need of a work on such an important subject. So each of them compiled an independent book in which he gathered all the verses of an-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh and explained the Qur'ānic laws that were subjected to abrogation (an-naskh). Both works, I consider to be the earliest on this subject to have come down to us.¹⁵³ It is rather difficult to decide precisely

152) See Durr, i, 108, 141-142, 143, 174, 177-179, 277, 289, 309,; ii, 123, 129, 130, 149-150.; I. Ka. Taf., i, 227, 302, 437-438, 501-503, ii, 191, 193, 204.

153) I possess a micro-film of the work of az-Zuhrī; as for the work of Qatāda, it exists in az-Zahiryya Library of Damascus, see Sezgin, I, i, 174, 178.

which of them was compiled first, as the authors were contemporaries. Moreover, there is nothing in either of these two works to indicate that one preceded the other, in compilation. We may therefore come to a probable conclusion and state that az-Zuhrī was the first to compile his work. It is the fame of az-Zuhrī and the eagerness and enthusiasm which he showed for writing, which leads me to think of this probability.

This work was narrated from az-Zuhrī by his student al-Walīd b. Muḥammad al-Muwaqqarī al-Umawī (d. 188 A.H.) who also narrated from him, his work Tanzīl al-Qur'ān. Both works have come down to us together in one manuscript written in the year 653 A.H., as already mentioned above.¹⁵⁴

Az-Zuhrī begins this work by saying: "This is the book of Mansūkh al-Qur'ān"; and then proceeds to mention three Qur'ānic verses (2:106, 13:39, 16:101) which indicate the permissibility of abrogation in Islāmic religion, and indicates the fact that abrogation has occurred in the Qur'ān.¹⁵⁵ Then he states: ".....The first to be abrogated in the Qur'ān was al-qibla. The qibla was towards Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) and then it was changed towards al-Ka'ba." Then he mentions the two

154) See p. 162.

155) Mansūkh, 3b.

verses (2:155 and 2:144) which related to the abrogation of al-qibla.¹⁵⁶ After this he mentions the second legal rule (al-ḥukm ash-shar'ī) which was abrogated in the Qur'ān and the two verses which are related to the abrogation of this legal rule. Then he proceeds to mention all the legal rules that were subjected to abrogation in the Qur'ān and the abrogated verses (al-'āyāt al-mansūkha) and the abrogative one (al-'āyāt an-nāsikha) which are related to them. First, he mentions the legal rule (al-ḥukm ash-shar'ī) that was subject to abrogation. Second, he mentions the verse that was abrogated (al-'āya al-mansūkha). Third, he mentions the verse that effected the abrogation (al-'āya an-nāsikha). But at times he mentions only the verse that was abrogated, and the verse that abrogated it, without mentioning the legal rule which is related to them,¹⁵⁷ indicating that he felt that the legal rule was obvious, and needed no mention; and he hoped that everyone who read his book would understand the legal rule that was the subject of the abrogation simply by reading the verses related to it.

The number of sūras which contain legal rules which were subject to abrogation, as listed in az-Zuhrī's book, is 17. They are the sūras numbered 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 16,

156) Mansūkh, 3b.

157) Mansūkh, 4a, 5b, 6a.

17, 24, 26, 33, 46, 48, 51, 58, 60, 73. The number of abrogative and abrogated verses is 105.

Az-Zuhrī makes no mention of the sources on which he has based his work: but if we compare the information that is contained in his work with what is narrated from Ibn-‘Abbās regarding the subject of abrogation in the Qur’ān, we find striking similarities between his views and those of Ibn-‘Abbās; not only in relation to ideas and concepts, but also in the use of words, phrases and sentences.¹⁵⁸ These similarities are so remarkable at times that I strongly believe that az-Zuhrī has derived his information on this subject from the narrations of Ibn-‘Abbās and heavily depended upon them for the compilation of his book.

158) Compare, for example, what is narrated by Ibn-‘Abbās about the abrogation of verse 8 of sūra ixiii (see Durr, vi, 38) with what is stated by az-Zuhrī in his Mansūkh al-Qur’ān, 6b, about the abrogation of this verse.

Compare also what is narrated by Ibn-‘Abbās in the abrogation of the night prayer (ṣalāt al-layl) (see Durr, vi, 276) with what az-Zuhrī states in his Mansūkh al-Qur’ān, 7a, regarding the abrogation of this legal rule (al-ḥukm).

Mansūkh al-Qur'ān, as it seems to me, is the first link in a chain of books compiled on the subject of abrogation in the Qur'ān. It marks the beginning of independent compilation in the science of an-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh.

By compiling this book az-Zuhrī opened the door for later compilers in this important branch of Qur'ānic sciences.

Because the manuscript of Mansūkh al-Qur'ān is so important for gaining a knowledge of abrogation in the Qur'ān and for the study of the development of the science of an-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh, I intend to publish it in the near future.

CHAPTER FOUR

AZ-ZUHRĪ'S SCHOLARSHIP IN ḤADĪTH AND SUNNA

(i) Az-Zuhrī, The Traditionist

Az-Zuhrī commenced the study of ḥadīth and sunna in Medina towards the end of his teens, after completing the memorisation of the Qur'ān and the study of language, poetry and genealogy.¹ At that time, Medina occupied a prominent position as the centre of learning² and as the abode of a large group of the scholars of ḥadīth and sunna, of the generation of the younger Companions and of the older Successors, who were the sons and clients (mawālī) of the older Companions.³ Az-Zuhrī attached himself to the study circles which they held in the mosque of the Prophet, and attended the sessions (majālis) which they held in their houses.⁴ During the course of his studies, he would pay serious attention to what was being narrated from the aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet, and would write down what he received from his teachers, question them, and seek clarification of legal matters pertaining

1) Dhahabī, v, 136.; I. Sa'd, II, ii, 131.

2) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132.

3) Ibid.; see also Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī."

4) See p. 22 ff.

to ḥadīth and sunna, and the circumstances (munāsabāt) related to them; about those aḥādīth and sunan which are abrogated (mansūkha) and those which abrogated them (nāsikha-la-hā).⁵ His teachers, observing his interest and the concern which he showed in the study of ḥadīth and sunna, and in their memorisation and collection, encouraged him in his pursuit and imparted to him all that they knew of the aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet. Moreover, they directed him to go to some of the male and female scholars who had a wide knowledge of aḥādīth and sunan, and to learn from them.⁶ They praised him for his skill in understanding the traditions, his capacity for memorisation and the beauty of his narration of aḥādīth and sunan.

Az-Zuhrī said: "I narrated to 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn a tradition. When I finished he said: 'It is excellent. May God bless you. That is exactly as it has been transmitted to us....'"⁷ Some of his teachers, who

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- 5) I. 'Asākir, xiv, 497a.; Jāmi', i, 73.; Tahdh., ix, 448.; Jāḥ. Bay., ii, 230.; I. Sa'd, II, ii, 131.; A. Zur'a, v, 63b.; Tadhk., i, 109.; Dhahabī, v, 144.; Madārik, I, i, 120.; Taqyīd, 106, 107.; Muṣa, ii, 258-259.
- 6) Dhahabī, v, 145.; Tadhk., i, 122.; A. Zur'a, v, 61a.
- 7) Mizzī, vii, under the rubric "'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn."

were the sons and grandsons of the Companions, showed him many documents and letters written during the period of the Prophet and the four rightly-guided caliphs (al-Khulafā' ar-rāshidūn) and preserved in their custody, and permitted him to copy them and narrate them on their authority.⁸ He continued his study of ḥadīth and sunna for about fifteen years, during which period, by virtue of his patience and perseverance, and of the assistance and encouragement of his teachers, he was able to memorise thousands of aḥādīth and sunan⁹ and to collect and copy down a great many of them on wooden tablets, loose sheets and riqa'.¹⁰ When az-Zuhrī felt sure that he had learnt all that his teachers knew of aḥādīth and sunan and nothing more remained for him to receive from them; and when his teachers themselves vouched for his capability and his vast knowledge in the field of ḥadīth and sunna, he journeyed to Damascus, the Umayyad capital,

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- 8) Amwāl, 361, 363.; Musta., i, 392, 393-394, 395-397.; Tirmidhī, iii, 106-107.; Tahdh., iv, 189.; Muṣa.; iv, 63, 88.; vi, 13, 145.; ix, 273, 274, 409.; x, 98, 132, 168-169.
- 9) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī."; Tadhk., i, 109, 111.; Nubalā', v, i, 98b.; Dhahabī, v, 136.; Tahdh., ix, 448.
- 10) I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 22-23.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 497b.; Tarājim, 67.; Dhahabī, v, 137.; Tadhk., i, 109.

to earn his livelihood and build for himself a stable future.¹¹ On reaching Damascus, his good luck led him to become acquainted with the greatest scholar of Damascus, Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb, the vizier of 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān, and (through Qabīṣa) to a meeting with 'Abd-al-Malik. 'Abd-al-Malik and Qabīṣa admired his knowledge of ḥadīth and sunna and brought him close to themselves, bestowing various gifts upon him, granting him the means of livelihood and all his material needs;¹² thus facilitating the pursuit of knowledge which he loved and cherished as the noblest form of worship and devotion. Az-Zuhrī said: "God cannot be worshipped by any more noble means than knowledge (al-ʿilm)."¹³

When Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb died, az-Zuhrī occupied the prominent position which he had held as the scholar of the royal palace and became his successor in the teaching of ḥadīth and sunna in the mosque of Damascus because there were none, among the scholars of Syria, who were his equal in these subjects and in his ability and aptitude for their narration. Az-Zuhrī said: "I did not find in ash-Shām (Syria) a single person who could benefit me with a

11) Nubalā', v, i, 97a.; Dhahabī, v, 138.

12) See p. 49 ff.

13) Dhahabī, v, 145.; Tadhk., i, 112.; cf. Jāmi', i, 51.

knowledge of at least one tradition."¹⁴ Makḥūl, the Syrian jurist, stated: "I have never seen one who is more learned than az-Zuhrī in sunna."¹⁵ 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz stated: "I have never seen any one who is more beautiful in the narration of ḥadīth than az-Zuhrī."¹⁶

(a) The teacher of ḥadīth and sunna

Az-Zuhrī regarded the ḥadīth and sunna as a revelation from God to his Prophet (Muḥammad),¹⁷ and as a trust which the Prophet had bestowed upon his community (umma).¹⁸ He considered it to be one of the duties of the learned to engage in the teaching and in the spreading of them: because in these activities lie the honour of this world and the hereafter.¹⁹ Therefore, because of the deep honour and veneration which he had for the ḥadīth and sunna, with great zeal and enthusiasm, he engaged in the task of teaching them and spreading them, spending much of his effort and time in this noble task. He used to

14) A. Zur'a, v, 59b.

15) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 136.; Majrūḥīn, 29.; Ḥilya, iii, 360.; Ma'rifa, 63.

16) Bidāya, ix, 342.; Nubalā', V, i, 98b.

17) Itqān, i, 128.

18) Bidāya, ix, 343.

19) Jāmi', I, i, 152.; Ḥilya, iii, 369.; Dhahabī, v, 145.

hold private classes and public lectures in ḥadīth and sunna in his residence at Maḥallat ar-Rāhib in Damascus and in his study circle in the mosque of Damascus.²⁰

Sometimes he would visit some of the cities and villages of Syria and Palestine to deliver lectures on the aḥādīth and sunan to the students, and to teach the people of these cities and villages in their mosques. Likewise, in winter and in summer, he would go to the desert to teach to the bedouins those aḥādīth related to matters of worship, and to make them understand the fundamental duties of religion.

Mālik b. Anas said: "Ibn-Shihāb would go to the desert in order to teach ḥadīth to the bedouins (al-a'rāb). If it happened to be winter, he used to feed them with dates and fresh butter (az-zubda); and if it was summer he would feed them with tharīd (boiled meat with bread crumbled into it) and samn (fat)."²¹

'Uqayl b. Khālīd stated: "Az-Zuhrī used to go out to the assembly places of the bedouins (al-a'rāb) in order

20) A. Zur'a, iii, 27a.; Dhahabī, v, 150.

21) I. 'Asākir, xiv, 510a.; See also Bidāya, ix, 345.

to make them understand (yufaqqihuhum) religious matters. He would bestow upon them gifts and wealth (as an encouragement for them to learn). Once, a bedouin came to him. Az-Zuhrī did not have anything to give to him, so he removed my headgear ('imāmatī) from my head and gave it to the bedouin. Then he said to me: 'O! 'Uqayl I shall give you another one better than that.' "22

Besides his activities in the teaching and spreading of ḥadīth and sunna in Syria, az-Zuhrī used to go to Ḥijāz during the season of the annual pilgrimage to fulfil the obligation of Ḥajj and to meet the Ḥijāzī scholars, and other scholars who visited Mecca and Medina. He would exchange narrations of aḥādīth and sunan with them; and deliver lectures to the Ḥijāzī students, and to other students who would come to Ḥijāz from various countries to perform Ḥajj and to study. During his visits to Ḥijāz, he used to hold sessions for the teaching of ḥadīth and sunna in his house at Mecca and in his circle in the Sacred Mosque; and in his house in Medina and in his circle in the Prophet's mosque.²³

22) I. 'Asākir, xiv, 514b.; Dhahabī, v, 150.

23) Fāṣil, iv, 40a.; Tamhīd, i, 67; Kifāya, 248; Madārik, I, i, 120; Dhahabī, 142.

As a result of the lively interest which he displayed in the teaching and spread of ḥadīth and sunna in Syria and Ḥijāz, az-Zuhrī attained great fame and popularity. Many Syrian, Ḥijāzi, Egyptian, 'Irāqī and Yemeni students learned from him.²⁴ By the beginning of the second century of Hijra, he was recognized as the most prominent and knowledgeable traditionist of the Islamic world. His colleagues and contemporaries among the scholars acknowledged his intellectual superiority over them,²⁵ and caliph Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik, as a mark of respect and honour for him, appointed him as tutor of his sons.²⁶ Many of the students of ḥadīth and sunna from Syria, Palestine and 'Irāq, undertook journeys to seek the knowledge of ḥadīth and sunna from him in ar-Ruṣāfa, a city which he took as his abode during the last twenty years of his life. His house in this city became the meeting-place of the students of ḥadīth and sunna.²⁷

24) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī."

25) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 135, 136.; I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 22.; A. Zur'a, v, 60.; Jarḥ, iv, i, 73.; Nubalā', V, i, 68b.; M. Jarḥ, 20.; Dhahabī, v, 136, 138.; Tadhk., i, 109, 110.; Tahdh., ix, 449.

26) See p. 118 ff.

27) Dhahabī, v, 141, 144.; vii, 151.

The students of Mecca and Medina awaited his arrival with great anxiety during the seasons of Ḥajj, in order to seek the knowledge of aḥādīth and sunan from him. When he visited Medina - the traditionists of that city would refrain from teaching traditions to their students,²⁸ as a mark of respect and honour towards him, and in order to afford the opportunity to the students to attach themselves to him. They used to advise their students to go to him and learn aḥādīth and sunan from him. 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ b. 'Āṣim b. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb said: "When I reached maturity and wanted to seek ḥadīth and sunna (al-ilm), I used to go to the scholars of the family of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, one after the other; and I would ask them about (the traditions) which they heard from Sālim b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar. When I went to them and asked, each would say: 'Go to Ibn-Shihāb and ask him....' "²⁹ Some of them would send their favourite students, and request him to take care of them, and to teach them. Ishāq b. Rāshid stated: "Muḥammad b. 'Alī sent me with his brother, Zayd b. 'Alī, to az-Zuhrī and said to him: 'Say to az-Zuhrī, Abū-Ja'far says to you advise and counsel Ishāq about good and teach him. Verily, he is from us, the ahla-l-bayt'. "³⁰

28) See p. 124.

29) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 135.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī."

30) Tahdh., i, 231.

The honour which az-Zuhrī received from caliph Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik, from the traditionists who were his colleagues and from contemporary scholars; and the wide admiration and acceptance which he found among the students of ḥadīth and sunna during the course of his lessons and lectures led him to concentrate, during the last twenty years of his life, on the teaching and spreading of ḥadīth and sunna, and to open his knowledge and wealth for the benefit of his students. He used various methods in his transmission of ḥadīth and sunna to his students.³¹ He compiled all the aḥadīth and sunan which he knew in dafātir, fanādīq and kutub and made them available to his students.³² He encouraged his students to study ḥadīth and sunna, and to be concerned about them, saying to them: "Ḥadīth is masculine. Masculine men seek it while the effeminate shun it."³³ "In holding fast to the sunna is deliverance."³⁴ He was especially kind and affectionate to the young students of ḥadīth and sunna. He would show favour to them, shelter them in his

31) See p. 24 ff.

32) See p. ff.

33) Fāsil, i, 5b.; Majrūhīn, i, 18-19.; Jāmi', I, i, 59; ii, 35.; Ḥilya, iii, 365.

34) Jāmi', I, i, 125.; Tarājim, 72.; Bidāya, ix, 343.; Ḥilya, iii, 369.; Dhahabī, v, 145; see also I'lām, i, 74, 78.

close companionship and inspire their self-confidence. Yūsuf b. al-Mājashūn said: "Ibn-Shihāb az-Zuhrī said to me, to my cousin, and to another student who was with us - we were very young students studying ḥadīth and sunna from him - : "Don't be ashamed. Don't look down upon yourselves because of your youth. If there is anything you want to know, ask me. Know that whenever 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb was faced with any difficult problems, he would invite the young Companions to go to him and would consult them: because the intelligence of the young is pure and sharp."³⁵ Sufyān b. 'Uyayna stated: "I came to az-Zuhrī to study ḥadīth. In both of my ears there were ear-rings, and I had a pigtail (dhu'āba). When he saw me, he said, again and again: 'O! little boy, little boy; come here beside me. Come here near me. I have never seen a student smaller than this.' "³⁶

During the course of his sessions on ḥadīth and sunna, he would narrate the traditions to his students slowly and clearly so that they would never miss any of them: and he would explain the meanings of strange and difficult words and phrases. He would explain to them the ways of following the sunna, teach them the legal aspects of the

35) Fāṣil, i, 7a.; Ḥilya, iii, 364.; Jāmi', I, i, 85.

36) Kifāya, 112.; see also Fāṣil, i, 6b, 8b.;

A. Zur'a, viii, 103a.; 105a.; Baghdād, ix, 176.

ḥadīth.³⁷ If he felt that the students were weary or bored he would dispel their boredom and revive their interest by telling them amusing stories, and reciting poetry: and would ask them to narrate to him stories and poetry which they knew. Ḥammād b. Zayd stated: "When az-Zuhrī perceived any sign of weariness among his students when he narrated traditions, he would say to them: 'Bring your poetry. Bring your stories. Verily, the ear needs some change so that it may not feel tired. The spirit needs some rejuvenation so that it may not feel weary.'" ³⁸
Muḥammad b. Ishāq said: "Az-Zuhrī used to say to us, during the course of his sessions: 'Narrate something which will dispel our tiredness and remove our boredom. Verily, the ear feels tired; and, verily, the spirit feels weary.'" ³⁹

The great enthusiasm which az-Zuhrī displayed in the teaching of ḥadīth and sunna, and the efforts he made to spread them, is beautifully illustrated in his own statement, in which he says: "No-one exercised such patience

37) Muṣa., i, 130, 379, 503, 547, 558.; ii, 144, 246, 296-297, 563, 563-564.; vi, 58-59.; x, 357, 434.; xi, 8, 15, 20, 96, 283-284, 303, 338.

38) Jāmi', I, i, 104.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 515a.; Dhahabī, v, 150.; Sam'ānī, 70.; Tarājim, 73.

39) Jāmi', I, i, 104.

in teaching this 'ilm (ḥadīth and sunna) as I did. No one spread the 'ilm as I have spread it. No one devoted himself to this 'ilm for the benefit of the people as I have done."⁴⁰

This led to the development of the methods of teaching and spreading of ḥadīth and sunna, and to an increased concern and interest being shown in them. Above all, it led to the rise of specialist scholars who contributed immensely to these studies. After the death of az-Zuhrī, many of his students and disciples - among whom some had attained the status of prominent scholars and traditionists of their generation⁴¹ - shouldered the responsibility for teaching and spreading ḥadīth and sunna in the Islāmic world; displaying in this field the noble qualities of devotion, dedication and sincerity which characterised the career of their illustrious teacher.

40) Hilya, iii, 366.; Dhahabī, v, 137.; Tahdh., ix, 449.; Tadhk., i, 109.; Bidāya, ix, 345.; Tarājim, 69.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī."

41) Mizzī, v, under "Shu'ayb b. Abī-Ḥamza"; ix, under "al-Layth b. Sa'd" and "Muḥammad b. Ishāq"; x, under "Muḥammad b. al-Walīd" and "Ma'mar b. Rāshid"; xi, under "Mūsā b. 'Uqba"; xii, under "Yūnus b. Yazīd."; Baghdād, I, 124-234; II, 296-308; VI, 82; IX, 149-150, 174-184; X, 400-407; XIII, 3-7.

(b) The Preserver of ḥadīth and sunna

While as we have seen, az-Zuhrī took a keen interest in the teaching and spreading of ḥadīth and sunna, he also had a serious concern for their preservation from distortion, falsehood and fabrication. His activities in this sphere are represented in the following sections:

1. Verification of the soundness of aḥādīth and sunan.

Az-Zuhrī was so seriously concerned about ḥadīth and sunna that he went to great lengths to ascertain the soundness of all the aḥādīth and sunan which he received and to check them against the possibility of error and defect. Whenever he received a ḥadīth or sunna from a narrator, he would go to another narrator who was at least equal in knowledge and reliability to the narrator from who he had received the tradition. He would either narrate the tradition as he had received it or ask questions about it until he had assured himself about the trustworthiness of the narration, and verified that there were no errors or defects in the material which he had received. In this way, az-Zuhrī confirmed the soundness of the aḥādīth and sunan which he received, and corrected any defects and errors which he found in them. The following examples will serve to illustrate this practice:

A. Az-Zuhrī said: "Muḥammad b. Jubayr b. Muṭ'am narrated part of a tradition to me on the authority of

Mālik b. Aws b. al-Ḥadathān. I went to Mālik b. Aws and asked him about it; and he narrated it to me completely, as follows: 'I went to 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.....' " At the end, az-Zuhrī comments: "I narrated this tradition to 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr. He said to me: 'Mālik b. Aws was right. I heard 'Ā'isha, the wife of the Prophet, narrating it in the same form.....' " ⁴²

B. Az-Zuhrī said: "Maḥmūd b. ar-Rabī' al-Anṣārī told me that 'Utbān b. Mālik - he was one of the Companions of the Prophet, and one of those Helpers (Anṣār) who participated in the battle of Badr - came to the Messenger of Allāh and said: 'O! Messenger of Allāh.....'" Az-Zuhrī narrated this tradition as he had received it from Maḥmūd b. ar-Rabī'. At the end he said: "I asked al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Anṣārī, a leading member of Banī-Sālim and one of their scholars, about the tradition which was narrated to me by Maḥmūd b. ar-Rabī'. He said to me: 'Maḥmūd stated the truth.'" ⁴³

C. Az-Zuhrī said: "'Urwa b. az-Zubayr narrated to me. He said: 'I said to 'Ā'isha, the wife of the Prophet, I do not see any harm (shay'an) in one who does not engage in as-sa'y (walking) between aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwa, and I do not care about not performing as-sa'y between them.'

42) Bukhārī, iii, 73-74, 486.; iv, 283.; Amwāl, 10-11.

43) Bukhārī, iii, 497-498.; Muslim, i, 250-251.

She said: 'It is a bad thing that you have just said, my cousin! The Messenger of Allāh performed as-sa'y. The Muslims engaged in it. Therefore as-sa'y is sunna...' " Az-Zuhrī said, after his narration of this tradition: "I mentioned this tradition to Abū-Bakr b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith b. Hishām. He expressed admiration, and said: 'Verily, this is sound perfect knowledge.....' " ⁴⁴

2. Criticism of fabricated aḥādīth and sunan

The fabrication of aḥādīth and sunan began a very short time before the beginning of the Umayyad period. ⁴⁵ The tendency to attribute false traditions to the Prophet, and to fabricate aḥādīth and sunan, increased during this period. ⁴⁶ Az-Zuhrī engaged in the task of warning the people against fabricating traditions and falsely attributing them to the Prophet - an act which he regarded as being destructive of the very foundation and edifice of ḥadīth and sunna. ⁴⁷ He narrated some traditions of the Prophet warning against fabrication and falsely attributing traditions to him, and threatening the fabricators with heavy chastisement in the hereafter. Al-Layth b. Sa'd

44) Muslim, ii, 562.; see also Tamhīd, ii, 98.

45) Sibā'ī, 89-120.; 'Ajjāj, 187-218.; Buḥūth, 16-41.

46) Ibid.

47) Fāṣil, vii, 70a.; Jāmi', i, 107-108.; Ḥilya, iii, 364.

said: "Az-Zuhrī narrated from Anas b. Mālik that the Prophet said: 'Let him who fabricates things and falsely attributes them to me make his abode in hell.' "⁴⁸ He accused the 'Irāqīs of adding to the authentic traditions and of fabricating sayings and attributing them to the Prophet. Yūnus b. Yazīd said: "I heard az-Zuhrī saying: 'O! people of 'Irāq! The tradition which sets out from us to the measure of a span becomes a cubit in your hand.' "⁴⁹ Al-Bukhārī narrates that az-Zuhrī said: "In the ḥadīth of the people of Kūfa, there are many distortions and fabrications."⁵⁰ Ishāq b. Rāshid said: "When az-Zuhrī speaks about the people of 'Irāq he always declares their 'ilm (traditions) to be weak....."⁵¹ He urged his students and others not to accept the Irāqī traditions, saying: "If you hear any 'Irāqī tradition, reject it. Do not accept it."⁵² His acute awareness of the dangers of the fabricated traditions issuing from 'Irāq and of their spread to other parts of the Islamic world, and his fear of their being mixed with the authentic traditions seem to be the most important reasons for his wide use

48) Tamhīd, i, 44.; see also Muṣa., xi, 261-262.; Muslim, i, 5.

49) Nubalā', V, i, 102b.; Dhahabī, v, 143.

50) Bukh. Ṣa., 166.

51) I. Sa'd, VI, 239.; Jāmi', ii, 34.; see also Baghdād, ix, 11.

52) I. 'Asākir, i, 170a.

of written methods for the transmission of his traditions. He said: "Had it not been for aḥādīth which flowed to us like a flood from the East (Irāq) - aḥādīth which we had never heard of - I would neither have written down the traditions for the sake of men nor would I have permitted them to write them on my authority."⁵³ Similarly, it was one of the most important reasons for his passionate care in the use of isnād in his narrations; and for inviting his students, his colleagues and contemporary traditionists, to use it so that reliable narrators may be distinguished from false narrators.⁵⁴

In addition to his warnings about falsification of traditions and about the false narrations of 'Irāqī narrators, he was seriously concerned to criticise and expose fabricated aḥādīth and sunan. In his criticism, he depended upon the Qur'ān, and aḥādīth and sunan which he received from his teachers, who were prominent scholars of Medina, noted for their knowledge, honesty and trustworthiness. Some of the aḥādīth and sunan which he

53) Taqyīd, 107-108.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 390b.;
Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī."

54) A. Zur'a, vii, 85.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 502a.; Kifāya,
556.; Majrūḥīn, i, 119, 228-229.; Ma'rifa, 6.;
Ḥilya, iii, 365.

criticised and exposed to the people are given below:

A. Az-Zuhrī said: "(Once when) I entered the court of al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik he asked: 'What is your opinion regarding the tradition narrated by the Syrians (ahl ash-Shām)?' 'Which ḥadīth O amīr al-mu'minīn?' I asked. He said: 'They report that when Allāh makes His servant a ruler He records his good actions (al-ḥasanāt) and takes no notice of his evil deeds (as-sayyi'āt).' 'It is unauthentic O amīr al-mu'minīn,' I replied, and added 'Tell me, who is more respectful in the eyes of Allāh: A prophet who is also a caliph or a caliph who is not a prophet?' He said: 'The caliph who is also a prophet is certainly more respectful to Allāh.' Thereupon I said: 'Verily, Allāh says to his prophet David: O David! Lo! We have set thee as a viceroy in the earth; therefore judge aright between mankind, and follow not desire that it beguile thee from the way of Allāh. Lo! Those who wander from the way of Allāh have an awful doom, forasmuch as they forgot the Day of Reckoning.'⁵⁵ O amīr al-mu'minīn! this is Allāh's warning to a prophet who was also a caliph. So what do you think of a caliph who is not a prophet?' Hearing this he remarked: 'People misguide us in our religion.'⁵⁶

55) Qur'ān, xxxviii, 26.

56) 'Iqd, i, 50.

B. Ma'mar b. Rāshid said: "Az-Zuhrī narrated to us from Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd b. al-ʿĀṣ from ʿĀ'isha that she said: 'Abū-Bakr sought permission from the Prophet (i.e. to enter the room of ʿĀ'isha). I was with him. We both covered ourselves with the same garment (mirt). The Prophet granted him permission. He fulfilled his need, while the Prophet was wrapped up in one single garment with me. Then he went out. Then ʿUmar sought permission from him. He granted it and he fulfilled his need, while the Prophet and I wrapped in the single garment. Then he departed. Then ʿUthmān sought permission to enter. The Prophet dressed properly, and sat upright. Then he granted him permission. ʿUthmān entered and fulfilled his need. Then he departed. Then I said to the Prophet: 'O Messenger of Allāh! Abū-Bakr sought permission from you and fulfilled the purpose of his visit to you while you were in that state (i.e. while wrapped up in one single garment with me). Then ʿUmar sought permission and fulfilled his need while you were in the same state. After that, ʿUthmān sought permission, and you took care to put on your clothes and sat upright. Why is it?' Then he said: 'O ʿĀ'isha! Verily, ʿUthmān is a very shy person. Had I permitted him to enter while I was in that state I was afraid that he might not fulfil the purpose of his visit.' Az-Zuhrī said: 'The Prophet said so: and not as the liars say that he said: 'I feel shy of a person, of whom even the angels are shy.' "57

57) Muṣa., xi, 232-233.

C. 'Abd-ar-Razzāq wrote in his al-Muṣṣannaf that Ma'mar b. Rāshid said: "Az-Zuhrī narrated to us from 'Abbād b. Numaym from his uncle that he said: 'I saw the Messenger of Allāh in the mosque, lying on his back, raising one leg over the other.' Then az-Zuhrī said: 'Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib informed me that Abū-Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān used to do that a lot. Thus a most serious thing has come upon the people.'⁵⁸ (i.e. They falsely attributed to the Prophet, and narrated, that he said: 'You should not lie on your back in the mosque, and raise one leg over the other.)'⁵⁹

Az-Zuhrī's insistence on verification, and his criticism of fabricated traditions and warnings against falsely attributing them to the Prophet, contributed immensely to the preservation of ḥadīth and sunna, and prevented them from becoming playthings in the hands of self-interested, mischief-making elements.⁶⁰

Traditionists and critics of ḥadīth and sunna attach much importance to his lively interest, and strenuous efforts in this field; and to his eagerness for and endeavours in the teaching and spreading of ḥadīth and sunna. They regard him as the traditionist who preserved

58) Muṣa, xi, 167.; Ma'mar, vi, 8., Fath, x, 308.

59) See Fath, x, 308.

60) See Majrūḥīn, i, 228-229.; Baghdād, ix, 9-10.; Jāmi', ii, 168.; Tadhk., i, 111.; Bidāya, ix, 342.

the ḥadīth and sunna from being lost, and as the one who protected them from distortion and falsehood. Al-Layth b. Sa'd stated: "Sa'īd b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān said to me: 'O Abū-al-Ḥārith! Had it not been for Ibn-Shihāb, many of the sunan would have been lost.'" ⁶¹ Ash-Shāfi'ī said: "Had it not been for az-Zuhrī, the sunan would have been lost to Medina." ⁶² Ibn-Taymiya said: "Az-Zuhrī safeguarded Islam throughout his life (by preserving the ḥadīth and sunna from distortion and falsehood)." ⁶³

By virtue of the honour and regard they accorded to az-Zuhrī for the contribution which he made in his service to ḥadīth and sunna, and of their recognition of his importance as a traditionist, they paid attention to the study of the aḥādīth and sunan that were narrated by him, and preserved them. ⁶⁴ Many of them specialised in them, ⁶⁵ and transmitted them in their compilations.

61) Bidāya, ix, 343.; see also Muslim, iii, 75.; Dhahabī, v, 151.

62) Nawawī, i, 91.

63) Shadharāt, i, 163.

64) Baghdād, iii, 410-420.; iv, 197-198.; Mizzī, i, under the rubric "Aḥmad b. Ṣālih al-Miṣrī."; Nubalā', VIII, ii, 182a-184a.; A. Zur'a, vii, 82-83.; Kattā, 110-111.; Tadhk., ii, 683.; iii, 956.

65) Ibid.

They compiled independent works about them. The most celebrated among which are:

- (1) 'Ilal Ḥadīth az-Zuhrī by Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā adh-Dhuhlī (d. 258 A.H.). This book is also known by another title, Az-Zuhriyyāt. Following its compilation, its author was described by 'Alī b. al-Madīnī as 'the inheritor of az-Zuhrī.' (wārith az-Zuhrī).⁶⁶
- (2) Aḥādīth az-Zuhrī by Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Muslim al-Abbār (d. 290 A.H.).⁶⁷
- (3) Ḥadīth az-Zuhrī by Muḥammad b. Ismā'il b. Mihrān an-Nisābūrī, known as al-Ismā'īlī (d. 295 A.H.).⁶⁸
- (4) Musnad Ḥadīth az-Zuhrī by Aḥmad b. Shu'ayb an-Nasā'ī (d. 303 A.H.), who is the author of a well-known book of as-Sunan.⁶⁹
- (5) Ḥadīth az-Zuhrī by al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Māsarjisī (d. 365 A.H.), who was nicknamed 'The Lesser az-Zuhrī' (az-Zuhrī aṣ-Ṣaghīr).⁷⁰

- 66) Jamhara, ii, 398.; Baghdād, iii, 410-420.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric "Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā adh-Dhuhlī".; Nubalā', VIII, ii, 207b-210b.; Kattā., 110.; Dhahabī, v, 150-151.; Abbott, ii, 183-184.
- 67) Kattā., 111.
- 68) Tadhk., ii, 683.; Kattā., 111.
- 69) Fahrassa, i, 145.
- 70) Tadhk., iii, 956.; Kattā., 111.; Abbott, ii, 184.

(ii) The method of az-Zuhrī in naql al-‘ilm

Az-Zuhrī used five principle methods for transmitting ḥadīth and sunna (naql al-‘ilm).

(a) As-Samā‘ (Hearing)

In this method of transmission, az-Zuhrī narrated traditions to one or more of his students, who listened attentively to the narration without writing down anything. When the session was over and az-Zuhrī had left, the students would write down the traditions which they had heard from him if they wished to do so.⁷¹

The sessions in which az-Zuhrī narrated the traditions in this manner were called majālis as-samā‘. The traditions which the students received from him were called al-masmū‘āt or as-samā‘āt.⁷²

It appears that az-Zuhrī widely employed the method of as-samā‘ in the transmission of traditions to his students.⁷³ He would narrate thirty traditions, more or

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- 71) A. Zur‘a, v, 60a.; Fāṣil, i, 8b.; vi, 68a.;
Tamhīd, i, 70, 71.; Ḥilya, iii, 363.; Madārik, I, i,
22.; Tarājim, 69-70.; Dhahabī, v, 137, 144, 148, 150.
- 72) ‘Ulūm, 143, 144, 145.
- 73) See Fāṣil, i, 8b.; Ḥilya, iii, 363.; Dhahabī, v,
144.; Madārik, I, i, 121-122, 136.

less, in the private and public sessions of as-samā' which he held for them.⁷⁴ He preferred this method of transmission to others in the early period of his career. Later, for various reasons, he used it less and less.⁷⁵

Here are some examples to illustrate his use of this method.

1. Ma'mar b. Rāshid stated: "I used to visit az-Zuhrī in his house at ar-Ruṣāfa. He used to narrate (yulqī) the traditions to me."⁷⁶

2. Mālik b. Anas said: "Az-Zuhrī came to us (in Medina). We visited him in his house. Rabī'a b. Abī-'Abd-ar-Raḥmān was with us. He narrated to us (ḥaddathanā) more than forty traditions....."⁷⁷

3. Again, Mālik said: "I visited az-Zuhrī in his

74) A. Zur'a, v, 60a.; Fāṣil, vi, 68a.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 500b.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric "Az-Zuhrī"; Tamhīd, i, 71.; Bukh. Ka., 221.; Bidāya, ix, 342.; Mādarik, I, i, 121-122, 136.; Dhahabī, v, 137, 144, 148, 150.

75) Tamhīd, i, 70-71.; Madārik, I, i, 121.; Tarājim, 69-70.; Hilya, iii, 363.; Dhahabī, v, 149.

76) Hilya, iii, 363.

77) Dhahabī, v, 144.; Tamhīd, i, 70-71.

house in Medina on the day of al-‘Īd, and I asked him to narrate to me (yuḥaddithanī) the traditions. He narrated to me (ḥaddathanī) seventeen traditions."⁷⁸

4. In another report, Mālik stated: "I used to sit in the presence of Ibn-Shihāb. I would have a thread with me so that I might count the number of traditions when he had finished narrating. When I returned home, I used to write them down. Ibn-Shihāb sometimes narrated thirty traditions at one session. One day, he narrated thirty traditions of which I memorized all except one. When I met him afterwards, I questioned him about that tradition. He looked at me and asked: 'Were you not present at that session?' 'Yes' I replied, and added: 'I memorized all that you narrated there except one tradition.' Then he said: 'The memory of the people has gone. I never memorised anything and thereafter forgot it.' Then he narrated to me the tradition which I had forgotten."⁷⁹

5. As-Shāfi‘ī said: "I asked Sufyān b. ‘Uyayna: 'How many (traditions) have you heard from az-Zuhrī?' He replied: 'Of those which I heard with others, I cannot give a number (that is, too many). Of those

78) Madārik, I, i, 121-122.

79) Madārik, I, i, 122.

which I heard alone, one.' "80

(b) Al-Qirā'a (Reading)

In this method, one of the students of az-Zuhrī would read to him from one of his original books or from a copy. If there were many students in the session, one of them would read to him while the others listened and followed the reading.⁸¹ Az-Zuhrī used to entrust the task of reading to the student who read most beautifully.⁸² He encouraged his students to read to him by saying to them: "Verily, a student reading to the traditionist is as good as hearing from him."⁸³

The scholars of the sciences of Tradition called these sessions majālis al-qirā'a; and they called the traditions which were read at them al-maqrū'āt.⁸⁴

The following are some examples to illustrate the use of the method of reading by az-Zuhrī in the

80) Fāṣil, i, 8b.

81) 'Ulūm, 122-129.; Bā'ith, 110-114.

82) Jāmi', ii, 178.; Kifāya, 387.

83) Kifāya, 387.; Bidāya, ix, 343.

84) Akhḷāq, 30.

transmission of his traditions to his students.

1. Mālik b. Anas said: "I saw knowledge (al-‘ilm) being read in the presence of Ibn-Shihāb."⁸⁵

2. Ma‘mar b. Rāshid stated: "Most of what we heard from az-Zuhrī was by the method of reading (‘arāḍatan)."⁸⁶

3. ‘Ubayd-Allāh b. ‘Umar said: "We did not receive knowledge (al-‘ilm) from Ibn-Shihāb except by reading. Mālik b. Anas used to read for us in his presence. He was eloquent in his reading."⁸⁷

4. ‘Ubayd-Allāh b. ‘Umar, again, said: "Most of what Mālik b. Anas and I received from Ibn-Shihāb was by reading (‘arḍan). Mālik would read to him for us. He was a good reader."⁸⁸

5. Ma‘mar b. Rāshid stated: "I read the knowledge (al-‘ilm) to az-Zuhrī; and when I had finished it, I

85) Jāmi‘, ii, 178.; Kifāya, 387.

86) I. Ma., ii, 13a.

87) Kifāya, 387.

88) Sam‘ānī, 94.; Jāmi‘, ii, 178.; Kifāya, 387.

asked him: 'Shall I narrate it on your authority?' He replied: 'Who has narrated it to you except me.' Which was his way of saying: 'Narrate it on my authority.' "89

6. Ibn-Abī-Dhi'b stated: "I did not hear anything from az-Zuhrī. I kept asking him: 'Did so-and-so narrate such-and-such things (traditions) to you?' He would reply: 'Yes.' "90

7. Sufyān b. 'Uyayna said: "I saw Mālik b. Anas and 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Umar coming to az-Zuhrī when he was in Mecca. They sought his permission to read to him (li-ya'ruḍā 'alayhi). He said to both of them: 'I wish to go to Medina. You, too, are going my way: therefore, when I reach Medina, come and read to me.....' "91

8. Again, Sufyān b. 'Uyayna said: "Ma'mar and Mālik received from az-Zuhrī most of what they had received of his traditions by reading ('arḍan). I received most of what I received from his traditions by hearing (samā'an). "92

89) Kifāya, 388, 411.

90) Kifāya, 389.

91) A. Zur'a, viii, 104b.

92) Madārik, I, i, 136.

9. Muḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh al-Anṣārī stated: "I asked Ṣāliḥ b. Abī-al-Akhḍar: 'Did you hear from az-Zuhrī this which you narrate on his authority?' He replied: 'Among these traditions there are some which he narrated to me (ḥaddathanī bihi) and there are others which I read to him.' "93

(c) Al-Imlā' (Dictation)

Az-Zuhrī sometimes dictated his traditions to his students, while they listened and wrote them down. When he had finished dictating, either he corrected their work himself, or the students compared their writings and made corrections among themselves, while he sat among them, so that they might refer to him any differences of opinion that arose among them during the course of the correction.⁹⁴

The scholars of the sciences of Tradition called the sessions in which the traditionist dictated his traditions to his students majālis al-implā';⁹⁵ and they called the traditions which were dictated at them al-amālī.⁹⁶

93) I. Sa'd, VII, ii, 32.

94) Sam'ānī, 77-79, 174.; Fāṣil, i, 8.

95) Sam'ānī, 18, 84, 142, 146.; Kattā., 159-162.

96) Kattā., 159-162.; Sam'ānī, 12.

Az-Zuhrī started to use the way of dictation in the transmission of his traditions to his students from the time when the caliph Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik (105-125 A.H.) pressed him to dictate his traditions to his sons, the princes,⁹⁷ when he appointed him to be their tutor in the year (106 A.H.).⁹⁸ He encouraged his students to attend the majālis al-implā', and advised them to bring with them writing implements whenever they came to him, so that they might not miss anything of what was being dictated to them, and so that they should not cause difficulty and hardship by seeking to borrow writing materials from each other. He used to say to them: "One who sets out from his home without an ink-pot and other necessary writing utensils, has already intended to ask for charity while he is still in his home."⁹⁹ He dictated to them, in the majālis al-implā', the asānīd and the contents of the traditions combined. Sufyān b. 'Uyayna said: "I used to go to az-Zuhrī when I was young. One day he dictated a tradition on the authority of both Abū-Salama b. 'Abd ar-Rahmān and Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib. When he had finished the

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- 97) Nubalā', v, i, 98a.; Dhahabī, v, 145, 148.; Ḥilya, iii, 363.; Fāṣil, iv, 39a.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 501., 502a.; Bidāya, ix, 342.; Arba'īn, 3a.; Trājim, 69.; Tadhk., i, 110.
- 98) See p. 118 ff.
- 99) Sam'ānī, 155.; Ḥilya, iii, 366.; Bidāya, ix, 345.

dictation, we started to compare our records of what he had dictated to us. We disagreed among ourselves about the isnād of that tradition. Some of us said that it was from Sa'īd; and others said that it was from Abū-Salama. Ibn-Shihāb, who was listening, asked me: 'What do you say, boy?' I replied: 'It is from both of them (kulāhumā).' I gave the sign of ḍamma to the letter Kāf instead of Kasra. Ibn-Shihāb laughed at my grammatical error, but he admired my memorisation of the isnād of this tradition."¹⁰⁰

(d) Al-Munāwala (Handing over)¹⁰¹

The handing over of traditions from az-Zuhrī to his students took four forms.

1. Az-Zuhrī handed over personally to one of his students some of his written traditions which the student had neither heard from him nor read to him, so that the student might preserve it and narrate it on az-Zuhrī's authority.

100) Fāṣil, i, 8b.

101) See 'Ulūm, 146-150.; Bā'ith, 123-124.

Al-Awzā'ī said: "Az-Zuhrī handed over to me a ṣaḥīfa (sheet) and said to me: 'Narrate this on my authority.' "102

'Abd-al-Malik b. Yaḥyā related: "Ibn-Shihāb handed over to one of his disciples some of his traditions in a tūmār and said to him: 'These are my traditions. Take them and narrate them on my authority.' "103

2. Az-Zuhrī handed over personally to one of his students some of his written traditions which the student had neither heard from him nor read to him, so that the student might copy them down for himself. The student would hand back the original copy to az-Zuhrī and narrate from his own copy on az-Zuhrī's authority.

'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ stated: "Ibn-Shihāb handed over to me a ṣaḥīfa (sheet) and said to me: 'Copy down what is in it and narrate it on my authority.'

102) A. Zur'a, ii, 25a.; v, 61b.; Kifāya, 460. For information about ṣaḥīfa and its various meanings among the traditionists, see Imtī'az, 208 ff.

103) Kifāya, 458.

I asked him: 'Is this permitted?' He replied: 'Yes.' "104

Ibn-Jurayj said: "I did not hear traditions from az-Zuhrī; but he handed over to me a volume (juz'an) of his traditions. I copied them down and he granted me permission to narrate them on his authority."105

The scholars of the sciences of Tradition referred to the foregoing two forms of al-munāwala as al-munāwala al-maqrūna bi-l-ijāza (handing over combined with permission).106

3. One of the students of az-Zuhrī would come to him with one of his books, which the student neither had heard from az-Zuhrī nor had read to him. The student would show the book to az-Zuhrī and seek his permission to narrate it on his authority. Az-Zuhrī would take the book, examine its contents and return it to the student after assuring himself of the soundness and authenticity of the book. Then he would permit the student to narrate it on his authority.

104) Kifāya, 497.

105) Jarḥ, II, ii, 357-358.; Tadhk., i, 170.

106) 'Ulūm, 146-147.

'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Umar b. Ḥafṣ said: "I handed over to Ibn-Shihāb one of his books. He examined it (naẓara fī-hi) and returned it to me. Then he said to me: 'Narrate it on my authority.' "107

Again, 'Ubayd-Allāh said: "I bear witness to the fact that Ibn-Shihāb, whenever one of his books was brought to him, would examine it then say to the person who brought it to him: 'This is my tradition. I know it. Take it and narrate it on my authority.' "108

Some of the scholars of the sciences of Tradition called this form 'arḍ al-munāwala al-maqrūna bi-l-ijāza (showing and handing-over combined with permission).109

4. One of the students of az-Zuhrī would come to him with one of his ṣuḥuf (sheets) or with one of his books, which he had neither heard from az-Zuhrī nor read to him. He would seek az-Zuhrī's permission to narrate it on his authority; and az-Zuhrī, without examining the ṣaḥīfa (sheet) or the book would grant him permission to narrate

107) A. Zur'a, v, 61b.

108) Fāsil, iv, 47a.; Kifāya, 456.

109) 'Ulūm, 147.

it on his authority. This may have been either because of his intimate knowledge of the student, and his faith and confidence in him, or of his knowledge of the ṣaḥīfa or of the book by a mere glance at it while it was still in the hand of the student.¹¹⁰

'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Umar said: "I used to see az-Zuhrī's books being brought to him which had neither been read by him nor read to him. When he was asked: 'May we narrate these on your authority?' he would reply: 'Yes.' "¹¹¹

Ibn-'Uyayna stated: "I saw a man coming to Ibn-Shihāb with a book containing some of his traditions. The man asked him: 'May I narrate this on your authority?' Ibn-Shihāb replied: 'Yes.' The man had not read the book to him."¹¹²

Ibn-'Uyayna stated again: "Ibn-Jurayj came to az-Zuhrī with a collection of traditions and said: 'I wish to read this to you.' Az-Zuhrī said: 'I am busy now.' Ibn-Jurayj then asked: 'Shall I narrate it on your authority?' Az-Zuhrī replied: 'Yes.' "¹¹³

110) Jāmi', ii, 178.; Kifāya, 456, 457.

111) I. Ma. Tā., ii, 27a.; I. Ma., ii, 7a., 13a.;
Kifāya, 456, 457.; Jāmi', ii, 178.

112) Kifāya, 457.

113) Kifāya, 457.

Mālik b. Anas said: "I have seen a ṣaḥīfa containing some of the traditions of Ibn-Shihāb brought to him. Asked (while the ṣaḥīfa was still folded): 'Are these your traditions?' He would reply: 'Yes.' They would ask: 'Shall we say that Ibn-Shihāb narrated to us?' He would say: 'Yes.' Ibn-Shihāb neither opened the ṣaḥīfa nor read it, nor was it read to him. Ibn-Shihāb considered this (form of al-munāwala) to be permissible."¹¹⁴

Some of the scholars of the sciences of Tradition called this form ijāza min mu'ayyan li-mu'ayyan fī mu'ayyan (a permit from a traditionist to one of his students to narrate a particular book or ṣaḥīfa on his authority).¹¹⁵

(e) Al-Mukātaba (Correspondence)

Az-Zuhrī would write by himself, or entrusted another person to write, some of his traditions, and would send them to whoever had asked for them, whether he was resident in the same city or in another city.¹¹⁶

The following are some examples to illustrate az-Zuhrī's use of the method of al-mukātaba in the

114) Kifāya, 470.

115) Bā'ith, 119.

116) Kifāya, 480, 488.; 'Ulūm, 153-155.; Bā'ith, 125.

transmission of his traditions.

1. Nāfi' b. Yazīd stated: "Ja'far b. Rabī'a narrated to me that Ibn-Shihāb wrote to him and said: 'Hind bint-al-Ḥārith al-Firāsiyya narrated to me from Umm-Salama, the wife of the Prophet. She said: 'The Prophet said.....' "117

2. Yūnus b. Yazīd stated: "Ibn-Shihāb wrote, while I was with him in Wādī al-Qurā, to Ruzayq b. Ḥukaym, who was the governor of Ayla, that Sālim narrated to him that 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar had said: 'I heard the Prophet saying ' "118

3. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal wrote: "Yazīd b. Abī-Ḥabīb did not hear anything from az-Zuhrī (i.e., from his traditions); but az-Zuhrī wrote to him."119 This means that all the traditions which Yazīd narrated directly from az-Zuhrī were from the collection of traditions which az-Zuhrī had sent to him.

117) Bukhārī, i, 218.

118) Bukhārī, i, 227.

119) I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 193.

4. Yahyā b. Ma'īn wrote: "Yazīd b. Abī-Ḥabīb did not hear anything from az-Zuhrī; but he said: 'Ibn-Shihāb wrote to me.' All that he narrated directly on the authority of az-Zuhrī was from what az-Zuhrī had written to him."¹²⁰

120) I. Ma. Tā., xi, 161a.; I. Ma.; i, 13b.; ii, 5a. Yazīd b. Abī-Ḥabīb (d. 128 A.H.) was one of the greatest Egyptian scholars. When he narrated a tradition from the book which az-Zuhrī had sent to him, he used to say: "Az-Zuhrī wrote to me" and then narrated the tradition. See Bukhārī, iii, 478.; Jaṣṣāṣ, iii, 368.

- (iii) Az-Zuhrī, the first compiler of al-‘ilm
(ḥadīth and sunna)

The writing of ḥadīth and sunna witnessed two stages of development during the first century and the first third of the second century after the Hijra. Each stage of this development has a name by which it is known, covers a certain period of time during which it had its dominating influence and has its characteristic features.

1. Taqyīd al-‘ilm implies the writing down of the aḥādīth and sunan without any order or arrangement, on al-alwāḥ (wooden tablets), aṣ-ṣuḥuf (loose sheets of writing material), ar-ruqūq (parchments), aṭ-ṭawāmīr (rolls of papyrus) and al-qarāṭīs (loose sheets of papyrus).¹²¹

Taqyīd al-‘ilm began during the later years of the Prophet's life (d. 11 A.H.).¹²² The Prophet himself ordered some of those Companions who had mastered writing

121) See Sezgin, i, 55.; Taqyīd, 8.; Lisān, viii, 54-55; xi, 414.; Ṣubḥ al-A‘shā, ii, 484, 485.; Imtiaz, 208-228, 289-295, 305-307.

122) Taqyīd, 68-70, 72-77, 80-81, 93, 95, 98.; Fāṣil, 71a.; Ta‘wīl, 365.; Bā‘ith, 148, 149.; ‘Ajjāj, 303-309.; Buḥūth, 227-228.; Imtiaz, 250 ff.

to record some of his aḥādīth and sunan; and by his emissaries sent many letters containing important teachings (aḥādīth and sunan) to various parts of Arabia. 123 After his death, the writing down of ḥadīth and sunna increased gradually among his Companions, the most prominent of whom were Sa'd b. 'Ubāda (d. 15 A.H.), Mu'ādh b. Jabal (d. 18 A.H.), 'Abd-Allāh b. Mas'ūd (d. 32 A.H.), Abū-Rāfi' (d. 36 A.H.), 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib (d. 40 A.H.), Muḥammad b. Maslama (d. 46 A.H.), Ḥujr b. 'Adī (d. 51 A.H.), Samura b. Jundub (d. 59 A.H.), Abū-Hurayra (d. 59 A.H.), 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ (d. 63 A.H.), 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās (d. 68 A.H.), Jābir b. 'Abd-Allāh (d. 73 A.H.), 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar (d. 74 A.H.) and Anas b. Mālīk (d. 91 A.H.). These Companions had alwāḥ, ṣuḥuf, ruqūq, ṭawāmīr

- 123) Muwaṭṭa', 106, 226.; Muṣa., iv, 4, 7, 88, 119-120, 136.; vi, 90.; ix, 326-327, 338, 339, 380, 383-384, 385.; I. Sa'd, I, ii, 19, 20, 23, 24, 32, 33, 35, 79, 84.; IV, ii, 24-25, 76.; v, 386-387.; vi, 116, 156.; VII, i, 72.; A. Dā'ūd, ii, 129-130, 131, 157.; iii, 178.; iv, 94-95.; Dārimī, i, 320, 321, 322, 323.; Amwāl, 13, 21, 27, 358-362, 363, 366.; Wathā'iq, 115, 123, 173-176, 180-182, 205-206, 216, 219, 225, 234, 244.; Imtiaz, 311-316, 332-334.; Abbott, ii, 14.

and qarāṭīs on which they had written many aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet, which their sons and grandsons inherited from them.¹²⁴

- 124) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 123, 124, 125.; IV, ii, 8-9.;
v, 216, 344.; vi, 116, 154.; VII, i, 115.; ii, 189.;
Fāṣil, 34b., 36a., 46b., 56, 66a.; Jāmi', i, 70, 71,
72, 73, 74, 76, 171.; Tamhīd, ii, 147, 148, 149.;
Taqyīd, 33, 34, 79, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 94,
95, 96, 97.; Musnad, i, 16.; v, 7-23.; ix, 233.;
x, 28, 172-174.; Muṣa., iv, 119-120.; xi, 259.;
Umm, vi, 3.; vii, 112, 164, 292.; Ṭayālisī, 15.;
Bukhārī, i, 366-368.; ii, 277, 296, 298.; iv, 289,
324, 425.; Muslim, iv, 357.; Tirmidhī, vi, 52, 89,
181-182; xiii, 326.; Nasā'ī, v, 18-23.; Dārimī, i,
103.; Shāfi'ī, ii, 104.; Jarḥ, IV, i, 276.;
A. Zur'a, viii, 99a.; Amwāl, 393.; Tahdh., ii,
267-269.; iv, 198, 236-237.; viii, 54.; Fath, i,
148.; Kifāya, 39, 353, 383, 384, 472, 506-507.;
Ma'mar, vii, 14.; Mashāhīr, 130.; Nubalā', iii, 58,
160.; Usd, iii, 233-234.; Iṣāba, ii, 332.;
Tadrīb, 205.; Tadhk, i, 36.; Alfiyya, 216.;
Nawawī, I, i, 142.; ii, 29.; Ṣaḥīfa, 1-31.;
Imtiaz, 346-390.; 'Ajjāj, 343-353.; Buḥūth, 230-
231.; Abbott, ii, 11-12.

The enthusiastic interest and concern for writing down the traditions (taqyīd al-‘ilm) increased manifold among the students of the Companions, both among the older Successors and the younger Successors. Among the scholars of this generation who attained fame in writing down the traditions were Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya (d. 73 A.H.), Sulaymān al-Yashkurī (d.c. 75 A.H.), Bushayr b. Nuḥayk (d.c. 80 A.H.), ‘Urwa b. az-Zubayr (d. 94 A.H.), Sa‘īd b. Jubayr (d. 95 A.H.), Abū-‘Uthmān an-Nahdī (d. 95 A.H.), Sālīm b. Abī-al-Ja‘d (d. 97 A.H.), Ḥibbān as-Sulamī (d. 100 A.H.), Mujāhid b. Jabr (d. 103 A.H.), Khālīd b. Ma‘dān (d. 103 A.H.), ‘Āmir ash-Sha‘bī (d. 104 A.H.), Abū-Salama b. ‘Abd-ar-Raḥmān (d. 104 A.H.), Tā‘ūs b. Kaysān (d. 106 A.H.), al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110 A.H.), Ṭalḥa b. Nāfi‘ (d.c. 117 A.H.), ‘Aṭā’ b. Abī-Rabāḥ¹²⁵ (d. 117 A.H.), Nāfi‘ (d. 117 A.H.) and Hammām b. Munabbih.

- 125) I. Sa‘d, V, 77, 133, 393.; VI, 174, 179, 203, 224, 233.; VII, i, 115-116, 126, 127.; ii, 17, 162.; VIII, 200-201.; Muṣa., iii, 490.; ix, 279, 283, 287, 317, 369, 372, 381-383.; xi, 425.; Ma‘mar, vii, 14.; x, 3.; I. Ma. Tā., ii, 23b.; x, 145a.; I. Ḥanb. ‘Ilal, i, 15, 43, 50, 247, 300, 316, 340.; Bukhārī, ii, 83, 123.; iii, 240.; iv, 115-116.; Muslim, ii, 683.; Tirmidhī, vi, 52.; xiii, 327.; Dārimī, i, 106, 128, 129.; Tagyīd, 44, 60, 61, 99, 100, 101,

Footnote no. 125 continues

Footnote no. 125 continued

102, 103, 104, 105, 108, 109.; Jāmi', i, 66, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75.; Jarḥ, I, i, 412.; ii, 268, 351.; II, i, 136.; III, i, 29.; Baghdād, i, 218.; x, 406.; xi, 232.; xii, 227, 229, 232.; Akhlāq, 137b.; Zuhayr, 3b., 4b., 11a.; Fāṣil, 35a., 35b., 36a., 64a., 76a., 77b., 78.; Tadhk., I, 80, 87, 88, 95, 166.; Tahdh., i, 470.; iii, 119, 329.; iv, 214, 215, 224.; vi, 94.; vii, 183.; Maṣā.; 134-135, 195.; Tadrīb, 24.; M. Jarḥ, 71, 130, 144-145.; Kifāya, 309-310, 321, 386, 389, 398, 434, 506.; Ṣaḥīfa, 27, 34, 44.; Mashāhīr, 190.; A. Zur'a, ix, 118.; Tawjīh, 7-8.; Imtiaz, 381, 383-384, 391-393, 394, 396-399, 401, 402-403, 416-418, 454-455, 460-462, 463, 464, 468-470, 471-473.; Abbott, i, 17, 22.; ii, 225, 228, 230.; Buḥūth, 232.; 'Ajjaḥ, 326, 327, 328, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357.

Footnote no. 125 ends.

Then came az-Zuhrī, who excelled over all his colleagues in the lively interest which he displayed in writing down the aḥādīth and sunan when he was a student in Medina.¹²⁶ He used to write down all that he heard from his teachers in respect of the aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet and of the Companions on slates, loose sheets and other writing materials. Abū-z-Zinād said: "We used to go around (naṭūf) to the scholars with az-Zuhrī carrying tablets and sheets, and he used to write down all that he heard from them."¹²⁷ Ma'mar stated: "Verily, az-Zuhrī sometimes wrote down the tradition on the back (ḡahri) of his shoes for fear of losing it."¹²⁸ The stage of taqyīd al-'ilm continued for a short time after the end of the year 98 A.H. and the beginning of the second stage.

- 126) Ma'mar, vii, 14.; Muṣa.; xi, 258-259.; I. Sa'd, II, ii, 135.; A. Zur'a, v, 60b.; Akhlāq, 156a.; Taqyīd, 106-107.; Ḥilya, iii, 360-361.; I. 'Asākir, vi, 379.; xiv, 396a.; Dhahabī, v, 145.; Bidāya, ix, 344.; Tarājim, 67-68.; Tahdh., iv, 448.
- 127) Tadhk., i, 109.; Dhahabī, v, 137.; see also I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 22-23.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 497a., 497b.; Jāmi', i, 73.; Tarājim, 67.
- 128) Jāmi', i, 73.; Taqyīd, 107.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 395a.

2. Tadwīn al-‘ilm implies the collection of the aḥādīth and sunan (recorded as described above) and writing them down in dafātīr, kutub, karārīs, ajzā’, nusakh and fanādīq (books).¹²⁹ All are comprehended in the single word dawāwīn, the plural of dīwān. Dīwān is an arabicised Persian word which connotes, among other things, a collection of loose sheets of papyrus or thin leather which are joined together by stitching or by pasting together the end of the sheets. From the word dīwān is derived the verbal noun tadwīn which joined with al-‘ilm form the phrase tadwīn al-‘ilm.¹³⁰

The stage of tadwīn al-‘ilm commenced during the caliphate of ‘Umar b. ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz (99-101 A.H.)¹³¹ and continued until the end of the first third of the second

- 129) See Taqyīd, 8.; Imtiaz, 239-241, 268-302.; Buhārī’nin, 11-16.; Sezgin, i, 55.; Lisān, v, 375.; viii, 77.; Farā’id, 312.
- 130) Tāj, ix, 204.; Mu‘jam, i, 305.; Imtiaz, 239-241.; Taqyīd, 8.; Hilya, iii, 363.
- 131) Taqyīd, 20.; Jāmi’, i, 76.; Irshād, i, 14.; Tadrīb, 40.; Qawā’id, 71.; Tawjīh, 6.; A. Zahū, 128.; Buhārī’nin, 11-16.

century after the Hijra, ending with the beginning of one of the new stages of writing down of aḥādīth and sunan known as the stage of taṣnīf al-‘ilm.¹³²

Az-Zuhrī was the first to compile ḥadīth and sunna in dawāwīn. He said: "None compiled this al-‘ilm (ḥadīth and sunna) before my compilation (tadwīnī)."¹³³ Ad-Dārawardī stated: "The first to compile al-‘ilm was az-Zuhrī."¹³⁴ Mālik b. Anas said: "The first to compile al-‘ilm and write it down in dawāwīn for the people was Ibn-Shihāb."¹³⁵ He was followed by some of his colleagues and contemporaries who were traditionists and jurists, among whom were Muḥammad b. Sīrīn (d. 110 A.H.), the Baṣran scholar who collected the traditions narrated by Abū-Hurayra from the Prophet and wrote them down in a book made of leather. He inserted between each tradition a sign in the form of ‘āshira (✱), as a mark which separates and distinguishes one tradition from another. At the end of the book, he wrote down a collection of sayings and juristic decisions (fatāwā) of Abū-Hurayra;¹³⁶

132) See p. 253.

133) Kattā., 4.

134) Jāmi‘, i, 73.; Nubalā‘, V, i, 98b.

135) Hilya, iii, 363.; Bidāya, ix, 345.; Ṣifa, ii, 78.; Tanwīr, i, 6.; Zurqānī, i, 10.; Fath, i, 174.

136) Sam‘ānī, 173.

Makḥūl ash-Shāmī (d. 115 A.H.), the Syrian jurist, who collected some of the aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet, and sayings and juristic decisions of the Companions, and wrote them down in a book called Kitāb as-Sunan;¹³⁷ and Abū-z-Zinād (d. 131 A.H.), the Medinan scholar, who collected the traditions narrated by 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Hurmuz al-A'raj, one of the prominent scholars of the generation of older Medinan Successors, and wrote them down in a book which he called Kitāb Mā-rawāhu al-A'raj,¹³⁸ and inserted between each of the traditions a small circle. In the same manner, he also collected the sunan related to al-Ḥajj and wrote them down in a book which he entitled Sunan al-Ḥajj.¹³⁹

We are here concerned to discuss in detail the role of az-Zuhrī in tadwīn al-'ilm and his achievement in this field.

137) Fihrist, 227.; see also A. Zur'a, v, 56a.; Az-Zarkalī, viii, 212.

138) Fāṣil, vii, 77a.; Sam'ānī, 173.; Baghdād, x, 230.; Tahdh., vi, 172.; Mashāhīr, 135.

139) Tab., vii, 36.

(a) Az-Zuhri's tadwīn of sunan for 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz

'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz assumed the caliphate of the Umayyad dynasty in the year (99 A.H.).¹⁴⁰ He was brought up and educated under the care of some of the most prominent scholars of Medina,¹⁴¹ and had a wide knowledge of the teachings of the Qur'ān, the sunan of the Prophet, and of the caliphs Abū-Bakr and 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.¹⁴² While he was governor of Medina (87-93 A.H.), he followed these teachings and sunan faithfully and put them into practice in his administration of affairs. He benefitted from the knowledge of the distinguished scholars of Medina. He consulted them about the religious and legal problems which he faced and respected their opinions.¹⁴³ From the time of his assumption of the caliphate, he worked assiduously in directing the affairs of the Umayyad

140) I. Sa'd, v, 301.; Tab., vi, 546, 550, 565.;

S. 'Umar, 120.

141) S. 'Umar, 22 ff.; I. Sa'd, v, 243 ff.; Dhahabī, iv, 164.; Tahdh., vii, 475.

142) M. 'Umar, 417 ff.; Muṣa., ii, 66.; v, 191, 212.; vii, 210, 278-279.; viii, 319-320.; ix, 107, 331, 340, 358, 367, 391, 395-396, 450, 453-454, 473.; x, 16-17, 162.

143) See p. 74 ff.

state on true Islāmic lines, managing them in agreement with the teaching of the Qur'ān, the sunan of the Prophet, and of the caliphs Abū-Bakr and 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb; and giving impetus to the teaching of religion.¹⁴⁴ He attached great importance to the ḥadīth and sunna; and because of his eagerness and enthusiasm for its practical application and his fear of it being lost, he sent letters to the scholars of the various provinces in which he ordered the collection and compilation of the aḥādīth and sunan and their teaching to the people.

- 144) S. 'Umar, 38, 39, 40, 63, 69-79, 87, 90-91, 93, 93-100, 104 ff.; I. Sa'd, v, 251-283.; Muṣa., i, 206, 207, 556, 558.; iii, 133, 169, 178, 289, 316.; iv, 23, 61, 62, 72, 80, 103, 106, 121, 127, 128.; v, 147, 191, 212.; vi, 18, 41, 44, 45-46, 48, 63, 96, 97, 102, 105, 108, 166, 380, 430.; vii, 67 80-81, 133, 278-279, 280, 294-295, 319-320, 404-405, 414.; viii, 80, 84, 102, 342-343, 377, 380.; ix, 11, 36, 49-50, 70, 104, 110-111, 112, 125, 126, 161-162, 275, 281, 296, 306, 309, 348, 358, 399, 420, 450, 454, 470, 474.; x, 7, 11, 14, 17, 23, 35, 42, 47-48, 51, 61-62, 86, 94, 100-101, 102, 116, 118, 121, 141, 171, 176, 179, 209, 214, 217-218, 235, 241, 300, 322, 334, 335, 338, 365, 366, 474.; A. Zur'a, ix, 123a.; Fāṣil, vii, 76a.

Abū-Nu'aym wrote: "'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz wrote to various provinces (āfāq): 'Search for the traditions of the Prophet and collect them.' "¹⁴⁵ 'Ikrima b. 'Ammār said: "I heard the letter of 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz (to some of his governors) in which it was stated: '..... issue orders to the scholars to spread the knowledge (al-'ilm) in their mosques, for verily the sunna is becoming extinct.' "¹⁴⁶ 'Abd-al-'Azīz b. Muslim stated: "'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz wrote to Medina: 'Search and find out the ḥadīth and sunna of the Prophet, and write them down, for I fear the extinction of knowledge (dhahāb al-'ilm) and the passing away of the scholars.' "¹⁴⁷ He sent some of the prominent scholars, such as Nāfi', the mawlā of Ibn-'Umar, Yazīd b. Abī-Mālik and al-Ḥārith b. Muḥammad, to some countries which had no traditionists, to teach the people ḥadīth and sunna. Ayyūb said: "Nāfi' informed me that 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz, sent him to Egypt to teach its people the sunna."¹⁴⁸ Ibn-'Abd-al-Ḥakam wrote: "'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz sent Yazīd b. Abī-Mālik and al-Ḥārith b. Muḥammad to the desert in order to teach the people the sunna....."¹⁴⁹

145) Fath, i, 2, 4.; Qawā'id, 71.

146) Fāṣil, vii, 76.; Sam'ānī, 44.

147) Taqyīd, 106, Dārīmī, i, 126.

148) A. Zur'a, ix, 121.

149) S. 'Umar, 167.

While pursuing this policy, he acted with determination and resolution both to collect and compile those sunan, related to administration, financial and legal affairs, which were practically implemented during the period of the Prophet, Abū-Bakr and 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, and to achieve their wholesale application and implementation in a unified manner in all the provinces that came under his authority. He wrote letters to Abū-Bakr b. 'Amr b. Ḥazm his governor in Medina, ordering him to collect the original letters and documents written on the instructions of the Prophet, Abū-Bakr and 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb to their emissaries, governors, army commanders and judges, which were preserved by the families of older Companions in Medina. He also ordered him to collect some of the sunan relating to financial and legal matters which he had heard (when he was governor of Medina) from al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad and 'Amra bint-'Abd-ar-Raḥmān, and send them to him.¹⁵⁰ He also sent letters to some of the

- 150) Bukhārī, i, 37-38.; Tirmidhī, iii, 101.;
Muwaṭṭa', 330.; I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 12.;
Taqyīd, 105, 106.; I. Sa'd, II, ii, 134.; v, 287.;
 VIII, 353.; Dārimī, i, 104.; Jarḥ, iv, 337.;
Amwāl, 358-359.; Bukh. Ṣa., 105.; Tahdh., xii, 39.;
 Abbott, ii, 22-32.; Imtiaz, 312-313, 330, 355-359,
 370, 409, 432-434, 470-471, 476, 488-494.

governors of other provinces ordering them to collect the sunan relating to blood-money (diyyāt) from the reliable scholars in their provinces, and to send them to him.¹⁵¹ When the letters, documents and sunan which he had requested reached him, he formed a committee of distinguished scholars of Syria and others whom he had called from Ḥijāz and 'Irāq - among whom were Sālim b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, Abū-Qilāba al-Jarmī, 'Awn b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Utba, Maymūn b. Mihrān, 'Abd-al-'Azīz b. Abī-as-Sā'ib, 'Irāk b. Mālik, Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī and az-Zuhrī¹⁵² - and entrusted them with the study of the letters, documents and sunan, and the assessment of their suitability for implementation. It is said that he himself used to take part in the work of the committee. Abū-z-Zinād stated: "I saw 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz gathering the jurists. They collected the sunan for him. When they came across any sunna (thing) which was no longer applicable, he¹⁵³ would say: 'This is superfluous. It is not applicable.' " When the committee had completed the work entrusted to it, 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz ordered az-Zuhrī to write down the selected materials. Az-Zuhrī wrote them down in a

151) See Muṣa.; ix, 337, 349, 377, 378.

152) See A. Zur'a, v, 63b.; vi, 70b.

153) Qubūl, 30.

daftar, arranging them according to the subjects of jurisprudence. He explained and commented upon some of them, indicating the manner of their adoption and implementation. Thereafter, 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz ordered copies to be made from this daftar and sent a copy to each province which came under his rule.¹⁵⁴ By this process was completed the initial phase of the work of compilation of the collections of the sunan of the Prophet, and of Abū-Bakr and 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. Az-Zuhrī refers to this work of compilation in his conversation with his colleague, the Medinan scholar, Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm. Sa'īd b. Ziyād stated: "I heard Ibn-Shihāb talking to Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm. He said: "'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz ordered us to collect the sunan. We wrote them in dafātir, and then he sent a daftar to every land over which he exercised his authority." ¹⁵⁵ In the same manner, he told some of the students to whom he had narrated some of the sunan which he had written for 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz, of the role he played in the work of compilation. 'Uqayl b. Khālīd said: "Ibn-Shihāb narrated to me that 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz ordered him to write down the sunan. Among those sunan which he wrote

154) Jāmi', i, 86.; Amwāl, 578-580.; see also Abbott, ii, 30-32.

155) Jāmi', i, 86.

down for him were the sunan related to alms (zakāt). Thus he wrote: 'This is the sunna in respect of the distribution of zakāt to those who deserve it.....' "156

The most noteworthy feature which we must observe in this discussion of what is generally considered to be the initial tadwīn of the sunan,¹⁵⁷ is that it was a work in the performance of which a group of prominent scholars took part; and that az-Zuhrī's role obscured the role played by others,¹⁵⁸ because it was he who arranged these sunan and wrote them down in the original daftar. We should also note that the original daftar and the copies which were made from it were attributed to 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz¹⁵⁹ because it was he who ordered the collection and writing down of the sunan.

156) Amwāl, 578.

157) Irshād, i, 14.; Tadrīb, 40.; Tawjīh, 6.;
A. Zahū, 128.; Qawā'id, 71.; Buḥūth, 235.;
Kattā., 4, 10.

158) Ibid.

159) See Muṣa.; vii, 133, 404-405.; ix, 296, 306, 336,
346, 348, 357, 386, 470, 474.; x, 35, 42, 47-48,
51, 61-62, 94, 111-112, 116, 179.

(b) Az-Zuhrī's tadwīn of aḥādīth for Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik

It has been already stated that the caliph Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik (105-125 A.H.) appointed az-Zuhrī as a tutor to his sons in the middle of the year 106 A.H.¹⁶⁰ After his appointment, he requested az-Zuhrī to dictate to them his aḥādīth.¹⁶¹ Az-Zuhrī, up to this time, had refused to employ dictation in transmitting aḥādīth and sunan to his students.¹⁶² It seems to me that his refusal may be attributed to two factors:

1. Dictation would compel him to repeat the aḥādīth and sunan more than once in the same session. Repetition made him tiresome and irritable. On more than one occasion, he said: "The repetition of ḥadīth is far more difficult for me than the moving of rocks."¹⁶³ He would rebuke those students who asked him to repeat the aḥādīth which he had narrated to them.¹⁶⁴

160) See p. 118 ff.; p. 222.

161) Nubalā', V, i, 98b.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 502a.; Hilya, iii, 363.; Bidāya, ix, 345.

162) Ibid.

163) Fāṣil, vi, 68a.; Jāmi', i, 140.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".

164) Fāṣil, vii, 85a.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 500.; Bukh. Ka., i, 221.; Sam'ānī, 80.; Dhahabī, v, 137, 143-144, 148.

2. Dictation is also a time-consuming process, involving the tasks of transmitting the traditions and correcting them. Az-Zuhrī disliked prolonging the sessions. He told his students on many occasions: "If the session is prolonged, the devil has a share in it." ¹⁶⁵

As the caliph pressed him, he was compelled to accede to his request.¹⁶⁶ When he dictated his aḥādīth to the caliph's sons, he made no distinction between them and his other students, who were the sons of the common people, to whom also he dictated his aḥādīth.¹⁶⁷ In this way, dictation became one of his methods of transmitting al-ʿilm.¹⁶⁸

Caliph Hishām was determined that his sons study ḥadīth and sunna; but he did not feel that az-Zuhrī's use of oral and written methods of transmission alone would suffice to enable them to learn all that az-Zuhrī knew of

165) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".;

ʾAkhḫlāq, 136a.; Bāʿith, 158.

166) Fāṣil, iv, 39a.; Nubalāʾ, V, i, 98b.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 501b., 502a.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".; ʾArbaʿīn, 3a.; Tarājim, 69.; Bidāya, ix, 342.; Tadhk., i, 110.; Tahdh., ix, 449.

167) Ibid.

168) See p. 221.

aḥādīth and sunan. So he asked him to compile the traditions for them in dafātīr so that they might be permanently in their hands as works of ready reference. 169 At first, az-Zuhrī refused to agree to his request, considering the hard work involved and the long time which the task of compilation would demand. When Hishām insisted that he should do it, he changed his mind. He agreed to carry out the task on condition that Hishām would help him by giving him the assistance of one or two scribes. Hishām appointed two scribes from the state office (ad-dīwān), who were noted for their skill in writing in clear, beautiful script.¹⁷⁰ They were called Shu'ayb b. Abī-Ḥamza (d. 162/163 A.H.),¹⁷¹ and 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Namīr al-Yaḥṣubī.¹⁷² He ordered both of them to attach themselves to az-Zuhrī during the period of the compilation, and to spend their time and energy in helping

- 169) Hilya, iii, 361.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 501b.; Nubalā', V, i, 98a.; Dhahabī, v, 143.
- 170) I. 'Asākir, xiv, 501b.; Nubalā', V, i, 98a.; Hilya, iii, 361.; Dhahabī, v, 143.; Tadhk., i, 221-222. Jarḥ, II, i, 345.; Abbott, ii, 177-178.
- 171) Mizzī, v, under the heading "Shu'ayb b. Abī-Ḥamza".; Tadhk., i, 221-222.; Dhahabī, v, 151.; vii, 149-152.; Jarḥ, II, i, 345.; Tahdh., iv, 351-352.; Abbott, ii, 177-178.
- 172) Tahdh., vi, 287.

him in this task.

With their assistance, therefore, az-Zuhrī commenced the work of compilation. Every day, he would dictate to them the aḥādīth and sunan, sometimes from memory, sometimes from the collections which he had written when he was a student at Medina.¹⁷³ The scribes used to write down what az-Zuhrī dictated to them in dafātir.¹⁷⁴

During the entire period of the compilation, az-Zuhrī's nephew and son-in-law, Muḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh, was with him, along with the two scribes, and heard all the aḥādīth which he dictated.¹⁷⁵

The work continued for at least a year.¹⁷⁶ It took

173) Ma'mar, vii, 14.; Muṣa., xi, 258-259.; I. Sa'd, II, ii, 135.; A. Zur'a, v, 60b.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 396a.; Ḥilya, iii, 360-361.; Taqyīd, 106-107.; Jāmi', i, 73.; Tarājim, 67.; Tahdh.; ix, 448.

174) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 136.; Dhahabī, v, 141.; Tarājim, 71.; Ḥilya, iii, 361.; Bidāya, ix, 344.; Tadhk.; i, 112.

175) Mizzī, ix, under the heading "Muḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Muslim az-Zuhrī".

176) I. 'Asākir, xiv, 501b.; Nubalā', V, i, 98a.; Ḥilya, iii, 361.; Dhahabī, v, 143.; Jāmi', i, 77.

thirty dafātir to contain his aḥādīth.¹⁷⁷ From these dafātir several copies were made.

When az-Zuhrī had completed the task of compilation, he handed over the dafātir and some of the copies to Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik, who deposited them in the library of the royal palace so that they might be at the disposal of his sons.¹⁷⁸ Of the remaining copies, one was given to

177) I. Ma. Tā., iii, 39b.

178) The dafātir which az-Zuhrī compiled for Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik were preserved in the library of the royal palace until al-Walīd b. Yazīd was killed in the year 126 A.H. They were then removed from there. Az-Zuhrī's student Ma'mar b. Rāshid witnessed their removal. See I. Sa'd, II, ii, 136.; Hilya, iii, 361.; Tadhk., i, 112.; Tarājim, 71.; Dhahabī, v, 141.; Bidāya, ix, 344.

Ma'mar does not mention what happened to the dafātir after their removal: but there are indications that they were sold and that some were bought from the markets by some of the students of az-Zuhrī, and others were bought by some of the narrators of ḥadīth and sunna who had not studied under az-Zuhrī. See Majrūḥīn, ii, 308.; Ma'rifa, 110.; Tahdh., i, 230-231.; x, 220.

Muḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh and one was given to Shu'ayb b. Abī-Ḥamza.¹⁷⁹ For the rest, it seems to me that az-Zuhrī distributed them among his students¹⁸⁰ and asked them to lend them to any of their colleagues who wished to borrow them. Yūnus b. Yazīd reported: "Az-Zuhrī said to me, 'O Yūnus! Beware of the dishonesty of the books (ghulūl al-kutub).' I asked him, 'What do you mean by the dishonesty of the books?' He replied: 'Withholding them from our friends (ḥabsuhā 'an aṣḥābinā).' "¹⁸¹

Az-Zuhrī's compilations of aḥādīth and sunan for 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz and Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik led to the spread of the art of compilation of ḥadīth and sunna among the traditionists and jurists who were his colleagues and contemporaries; and to the growth and development of compilations in the realm of ḥadīth and sunna. Shortly

179) I. Ma. Tā., iii, 39b.; Mizzī, v, under the heading "Shu'ayb b. Abī-Ḥamza".; ix, under the heading "Muḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Muslim".; M. Jarḥ, 260.

180) Tahdh., i, 255-256, 296.; vi, 165, 287-288, 295.; vii, 13-14.; Madārik, I, i, 148, 149.

181) Sam'ānī, 176.; Dhahabī, v, 144.; Bidāya, ix, 345. cf. Ḥilya, iii, 366.; 'Ulūm, 183.

after his death, there began a new stage in the field of writing down of ḥadīth and sunna which was known as taṣnīf al-‘ilm - the writing down of aḥādīth and sunan, divided into chapters and sections and arranged according to legal subjects.¹⁸² The first and most prominent of those who compiled aḥādīth and sunan on this basis were the students of az-Zuhrī who were deeply influenced by his compilations. The most distinguished among them were:

1. ‘Abd-al-Malik b. ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz b. Jurayj (d. 150 A.H.),¹⁸³ who compiled (ṣannafa) Kitāb as-Sunan.¹⁸⁴ He is considered to be the first author (muṣannif) of ḥadīth and sunna in Islām.¹⁸⁵

- 182) Tāj, vi, 168.; Mu‘jam, i, 528.; Tagyīd, 8.; Imtiaz, 241-242.; Sezgin, i, 227, 262.; A. Zahū, 244.
- 183) I. Sa‘d, v, 361-362.; Ma‘ārif, 167.; Baghdād, x, 400-407.; Jam‘, i, 314.; I. Khall., i, 309-360.; Jarḥ, II, ii, 356-358.; Bukh. Ka., III, i, 422-423.; Mashāhīr, 145.; Tadhk., i, 169-171.; Tahdh., vi, 402-406.
- 184) Fihrist, 226.; Kattā., 34.; Sezgin, i, 263.
- 185) Baghdād, x, 401.; Dhahabī, vi, 559.; I. Khall., i, 359.; Tahdh., vi, 403-404.; Kattā., 8, 9, 34.

2. Ma'mar b. Rāshid (d. 153 A.H.),¹⁸⁶ who compiled Kitāb al-Jāmi' Fī as-Sunan,¹⁸⁷ which is popularly known as Jāmi' Ma'mar.¹⁸⁸ Because of it, its author is regarded as the first author (muṣannif) of ḥadīth and sunna in Yemen.¹⁸⁹
3. 'Abd-ar-Raḥman b. 'Amr al-Awzā'ī (d. 157 A.H.)¹⁹⁰ who wrote a book which he called Kitāb as-Sunan Fī al-Fiqh,¹⁹¹ was one of the Syrian students of az-Zuhrī.
4. Muḥammad b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. al-Mughīra b. Abī-Dhi'b (d. 159 A.H.)¹⁹² who compiled a book entitled Kitāb as-Sunan,¹⁹³ was one of the Medinan students of az-Zuhrī.

- 186) I. Sa'd, v, 397.; Mizzī, x, under the heading "Ma'mar b. Rāshid".; Ja'dī, 66, 74.; Dhahabī, vi, 394-397.; Tadhk, i, 190-191.
- 187) Ja'dī, 66.
- 188) Ja'dī, 74.; Kattā., 41.
- 189) Kattā., 8, 9.; Tadhk., i, 191.
- 190) I. Sa'd, VII, ii, 185.; Jarḥ, II, ii, 266-267.; Hilya, vi, 135-149.; Tahdh., vi, 238-242.; Tadhk., i, 178-183.; M. Jarḥ, 184-218.
- 191) Fihrist, 227.
- 192) Baghdād, II, 296-305.; Tadhk., i, 191-193.; Tahdh., ix, 303-307.
- 193) Fihrist, 225.

5. Mālik b. Anas (d. 179 A.H.),¹⁹⁴ who compiled the well-known work entitled al-Muwaṭṭa', and because of it, was considered the first author (muṣannif) of ḥadīth and sunna in Medina.¹⁹⁵
6. Hushaym b. Bashīr al-Wāsiṭī (d. 183 A.H.),¹⁹⁶ who compiled a book called Kitāb as-Sunan Fī al-Fiqh,¹⁹⁷ was one of those 'Iraqī students who received the aḥādīth and sunan from az-Zuhrī during the pilgrimage season in Mecca.¹⁹⁸
7. Sufyān b. 'Uyayna (d. 198 A.H.),¹⁹⁹ who compiled a

- 194) Ma'ārif, 170-171.; Tamhīd, i, 61-92.; Bukh. Ka., IV, i, 310.; Mashāhir, 140.; I. Khall., i, 555-556.; Tahdh., x, 5-9.; Sezgin, i, 457-464.; Tadhk., i, 207-213.; Fihrist, 198-199.
- 195) Kattā., 6-7, 9, 13-14.
- 196) Tadhk., i, 248-249.; Tahdh., xi, 59-63.
- 197) Fihrist, 228.
- 198) Tahdh., xi, 60.
- 199) Ma'ārif, 173.; I. Sa'd, V, 364-365.; Baghdād, ix, 174-184.; Jam', i, 195.; I. Khall., i, 264.; Tadhk., i, 262-264.; Jarḥ, II, i, 225-227.; Tahdh., iv, 117-122.; M. Jarḥ, 32-54.; Hilya, vii, 270.

book entitled al-Jāmi' Fī as-Sunan,²⁰⁰ was one of the Meccan students of az-Zuhrī. His book appeared a few years after the as-Sunan of his Meccan colleague, Ibn-Jurayj. Sufyān lived for 91 years and he was the last to die among the students of az-Zuhrī.²⁰¹

(iv) Rijāl az-Zuhrī²⁰²

Az-Zuhrī received the aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet directly from a large number of scholars, traditionists and narrators. Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 361 A.H.) mentions about 190 of them in his book Rijāl 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr wa-Jamā'a min at-Tābi'in.²⁰³ Yūsuf al-Mizzī (d. 743 A.H.) mentions about 150 of them in his work Tahdhīb al-Kamāl Fī Asmā' ar-Rijāl²⁰⁴ and gives very long

200) Kattā., 9, 41.; Qūt, ii, 324.

201) I. Sa'd, V, 365.

202) Rijāl al-muḥaddith is a technical term used exclusively by the scholars of the science of Tradition to denote the scholars, traditionists and narrators, both men and women from whom the traditionist received the aḥādīth and sunan directly.

203) See Rijāl, 8a-13a.

204) See Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".

and illuminating biographical accounts of most of them. Ibn-Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 853 A.H.), in his work Tahdhīb at-Tahdhīb gives short, but very useful, biographical sketches of most of these scholars, traditionists and narrators, and refers to some of the famous works on ḥadīth and sunna, like aṣ-Ṣiḥāḥ as-Sitta, which contains what az-Zuhrī had narrated on their authority.²⁰⁵ These scholars, traditionists and narrators form the first links in the chains of transmitters (asānīd) of az-Zuhrī. Because they are important sources of information about his traditions and because they are, in fact, his sources; and to distinguish between those of his asānīd which are complete (muttaṣila) and those which are incomplete (mursala), the present writer has classified them in various groups. In each group, he names the most important scholars, traditionists and narrators and makes some useful comments about the authenticity of az-Zuhrī's asānīd.

205) See Tahdh., i, 97, 133, 134-135, 139, 233, 329, 371-372, 377, 385-386, 396.; ii, 13, 25, 100, 144, 193, 223, 231, 320, 390, 402.; iii, 26, 30, 45, 47, 62, 63, 74-75, 80, 120, 128, 135, 219, 244, 265, 323, 419, 437, 451, 454, 464, 466, 477.; iv, 20, 21, 42, 61, 74, 78, 139, 143, 178, 229, 242, 245, 252, 379, 428, 432, 435, 445, 461.; v, 7, 9, 14, 64, 82, 85-86, 93, 164, 166, 189, 265-266, 270, 284, 285, 290, 319-320, 339.

(a) The group of the Companions

This group consists of the Companions from whom az-Zuhrī received ḥadīth and sunna directly. It does not exceed fifteen Companions.²⁰⁶ The most prominent of them are:

1. ‘Abd-Allāh b. ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 74 A.H.)

He is considered to be the Companion who, next to Abu-Hurayra, transmitted the largest number of traditions from the Prophet.²⁰⁷ He narrated 2630 traditions.²⁰⁸ Az-Zuhrī became acquainted with ‘Abd-Allāh during the last years of his life, and once accompanied him on the Hajj; but he received only a very few of his traditions from him directly.²⁰⁹ This is because, during the last years of his life, Ibn-‘Umar only rarely narrated traditions.²¹⁰ As for the rest, az-Zuhrī received them

206) A. Zur‘a, v, 61b., 62a.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".; Tadhk., i, 108.; Tahdh., ix, 445-446.

207) Asmā’, 1a.; Nawawī, I, i, 280.

208) Asmā’, 1a.; Riyāḍ, 51.; Shadharāt, i, 63.

209) Nubalā’, V, i, 95b.; I. ‘Asākir, xiv, 496a.; Dhahabī, v, 136.; Tahdh., ix, 451.

210) I. Mājah, i, 8.; Dārīmī, i, 84.; Bayhaqī, i, 11.; Tadhk., i, 39-40.; I. Sa‘d, IV, i, 106.; Nawawī, I, i, 127.

from his sons, Sālim, Ḥamza, 'Abd-Allāh and 'Ubayd-Allāh and from his mawlā, Nāfi'.²¹¹ So important were the traditions narrated by az-Zuhrī from Sālim from his father 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, that Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241 A.H.) thought of compiling an independent work in which he wished to collect those traditions: but he abandoned this idea, being satisfied with what he had gathered from it in the musnad of 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar in al-Musnad.²¹²

2. Anas b. Mālīk (d. 91 A.H.)

He was the servant of the Prophet,²¹³ and the Companion who, next to 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, narrated the largest number of traditions from him.²¹⁴ The number of traditions narrated by him is 2286.²¹⁵ Anas wrote down the traditions which he heard from the Prophet. He used to lend them to his students and ask them to copy them.²¹⁶ Az-Zuhrī met him in Damascus during his stay there. He

211) Rijāl, 8a-13a.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".

212) See Musnad, vi, 207 ff., vii, 7 ff., viii, 3ff., ix, 3 ff.

213) I. Sa'd, VII, i, 10.; A. Zur'a, v, 62a., viii, 102a.; Usd, i, 127-128.; Jam', i, 35.

214) Asmā', 1a.; Nawawī, I, i, 280.

215) Asmā', 1a.; Nawawī, I, i, 127.

216) Taqyīd, 95, 96.

became attached to him and, in his presence recited the Qur'ān, which he had committed to memory.²¹⁷ Az-Zuhrī received from Anas most of his traditions, memorised them, and gained a deep understanding of them.²¹⁸ Because of this, the critics of Tradition consider the isnād of az-Zuhrī from Anas from the Prophet to be one of the soundest asānīd of all the traditions of the Prophet.²¹⁹ Because of the importance of the traditions narrated by az-Zuhrī from Anas, Sulaymān b. Aḥmad aṭ-Ṭabarānī (d. 360 A.H.) compiled an independent work on them, entitled Aḥādīth az-Zuhrī 'An Anas b. Mālīk.²²⁰

3. As-Sā'ib b. Yazīd (d. 91 A.H.)

As-Sā'ib b. Yazīd was a younger Companion. He narrated only a small group of the Prophet's traditions, most of which he had received from 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (13-23 A.H.).²²¹ 'Umar was very fond of him and, during

217) Ghāya, ii, 262-263.

218) Nawawī, I, ii, 58.; Tahdh, ii, 3.

219) Ma'rifa, 55.; Musnad, i, 146.

220) Tadhk., ii, 914.

221) A. Zur'a, v, 62b.; Jam', i, 202.; Ma'rifa, 24.; Iṣāba, ii, 12.; Nawawī, I, i, 208.; Tahdh., iii, 450-451.

his caliphate, assigned to him the post of supervisor (muhtasib) of the markets of Medina.²²² Az-Zuhrī associated with him and received from him most of his traditions.²²³ Ibn-Ḥazm (d. 406 A.H.) considers the isnād of az-Zuhrī from as-Sā'ib b. Yazīd from 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb from the Prophet to be the soundest of all the asānīd of the Prophet's traditions.²²⁴ It appears that the preference which Ibn-Ḥazm gives to this isnād over the isnād of az-Zuhrī from Sālim b. 'Abd-Allāh from 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar from 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (which some well known critics of Tradition considered to be the soundest of all the asānīd)²²⁵ is due to the fact that the former isnād belongs to the category of al-isnād al-'ālī whereas the latter belongs to the category of al-isnād an-nāzil.²²⁶

4. Sahl b. Sa'd as-Sā'idī (d. 91 A.H.)

He was a younger Companion who heard from the Prophet very few of his traditions.²²⁷ The rest of the traditions²²⁸ which he narrated were received from the older Companions.

222) Istī'āb, ii, 576.; Tahdh., iii, 451.; Iṣāba, ii, 13.

223) See Musnad, i, 197, 247, 274, 275, 301.

224) Tadrīb, 36.

225) See Kifāya, 563.; Ma'rifa, 54.

226) See Bā'ith, 159-164.

227) Jam', i, 186.; Istī'āb, ii, 664.; Iṣāba, ii, 88.

228) Tahdh., iv, 252.

Az-Zuhrī met him in Medina, and heard from him there his traditions. As Sahl b. Sa'd was only a youth when the Prophet died, whenever az-Zuhrī narrated a tradition from him, he always added the phrase, "Sahl b. Sa'd narrated to me - he had seen the Prophet and heard from him: when the Prophet died, he was fifteen years of age - that the Prophet said....."²²⁹

(b) The group of the older 'Arab Successors -
The relatives of the Companions.

This group constitutes the rijāl of az-Zuhrī from the generation of the older Successors among the 'Arabs. It includes the sons, grandsons and other relatives of the Companions, the muhājirūn and Anṣār, who inherited the ḥadīth and sunna from their fathers and their relatives among the Companions, and who shouldered the responsibility of safeguarding them from the dangers of being lost and distorted after the death of the Companions. Some of them were the teachers of az-Zuhrī for many years and left their deep influence on his personality. The credit for the fame he attained in the field of learning and scholarship belongs mainly to them. The most celebrated among them are classified below in chronological order of the date of their death.

229) I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 303, 304.; Fāṣil, i, 8a.;
A. Zur'a, viii, 101b.

1. Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib (d. 94 A.H.)

He is the most famous and the most learned of all the scholars among the older Successors. Al-Qasim b. Muḥammad²³⁰ said: "Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib is our master and our scholar." 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn stated: "Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib is the most learned of all men (an-nās) in ḥadīth and sunna and āthār....."²³¹ Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib said of himself: "There remains none who is more learned than I in every juristic decision of the Messenger of Allāh, Abū-Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān."²³² When az-Zuhrī was questioned about the sources of Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib's knowledge, he replied: "He derived it from Zayd b. Thābit, Sa'd b. Waqqāṣ, Ibn-'Abbās and Ibn-'Umar. He used to visit 'Ā'isha and Umm-Salama, the wives of the Prophet, and learned from them. He heard the traditions from 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib, Ṣuhayb ar-Rūmī and Muḥammad b. Maslama. Most of the aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet which he narrated were those which he received from Abū-Hurayra. He was the son-in-law of Abū-Hurayra."²³³

Az-Zuhrī was attached to the study circle of

230) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 139.

231) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 130.

232) I. Sa'd, V, 89.

233) I. Sa'd, V, 89.

Ibn-al-Musayyib for many years²³⁴ and received from him all that he had narrated from the aḥādīth and sunan.²³⁵ The critics of Tradition consider that the soundest of all the asānid of the traditions which Abū-Hurayra

- 234) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 131.; Bukh., Sa, 108.;
I. 'Asākir, xiv, 500b.; Mizzī, x, under the
rubric "az-Zuhrī".
- 235) A. Zur'a, v, 63b.; Nubalā', V, i, 102a.; Dhahabī,
v, 142. Bukhārī, iii, 29, 70, 123, 128, 191, 192,
210, 213, 237, 255, 264, 271, 274, 304, 305, 330,
413, 452, 473, 485, 513, 514.; iv, 27, 28, 32,
52, 66, 79, 95, 100, 115, 139, 142, 155, 157, 158,
195, 198, 207, 212, 217, 227, 232, 234, 246, 249,
253, 259, 265, 271, 282, 286, 301, 308, 311, 312,
325, 346, 355, 357, 368, 371, 379, 380, 392, 408,
412, 419, 447, 478.; Muslim, i, 25, 33, 34, 40,
48, 61, 62, 71, 77, 90, 93, 105, 111, 153, 161,
192, 195, 226, 233, 258.; ii, 373, 374, 377,
424, 448, 484, 608, 615, 621, 661, 697.; iii, 5,
12, 31, 34, 38, 51, 87, 102, 107, 118, 264.;
iv, 3, 24, 39, 41, 42, 49, 69, 81, 84, 88, 89, 93,
100, 102, 103, 122, 144, 148, 149, 160, 161, 192,
194, 196, 204, 216, 222, 250, 262, 281, 307, 316,
318, 320, 322, 354.

narrated from the Prophet is the isnād of az-Zuhrī from Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib from Abū-Hurayra.²³⁶

2. 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr (d. 94 A.H.)

He is second to Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib both in fame and in learning. His aunt 'Ā'isha, the Prophet's wife, brought him up and educated him. She directed him to attach himself to the learned Companions and the famous narrators of Tradition among them, so that he might receive the aḥādīth and sunan from them. It is narrated that he stated: "'Ā'isha said to me, 'Oh! my nephew. News has reached me that 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ is passing by us on his way to al-Ḥajj. Therefore go and meet him and question him. Verily, he possesses a great deal of knowledge from the Prophet.' Then I met him and questioned him about things (aḥādīth and sunan) which he narrated from the Prophet."²³⁷

'Urwa wrote note-books on jurisprudence, which were burnt at the time of the battle of al-Ḥarra (63 A.H.).²³⁸

236) Bā'ith, 23.

237) I'lām, i, 52.; see also I. Sa'd, VIII, 129.

238) I. Ma. Tā., ii, 23b.; Muṣa., xi, 425.; I. Sa'd, v, 133.; Sam'ānī, 78-79.; Jāmi', i, 75.

He also wrote down the traditions which he had heard from 'Ā'isha.²³⁹ It is reported that he said, just four years before the death of 'Ā'isha: "If 'Ā'isha dies, I would not regret the loss of a single tradition from her, because I have memorised and written them all down."²⁴⁰

As well as being famous in the field of ḥadīth and sunna and in the field of fiqh, 'Urwa was equally well-known for his vast knowledge of sīra and maghāzī. It is reported that he was the first to compile a book on maghāzī.²⁴¹

'Urwa taught the aḥādīth and sunan to his students in his palace in al-'Aqīq.²⁴² He encouraged them to pay close attention to learning and writing down his traditions. Az-Zuhrī reported: "'Urwa used to encourage his students to learn his traditions."²⁴³ Hishām b. 'Urwa stated: "My father, 'Urwa, asked me, 'Did you write down ḥadīth?' I replied, 'Yes.' Then he asked, 'Did you read to me ('aradta 'alayya) what you had written?' I replied, 'No.'

239) Kifāya, 41.

240) Tarājim, 46.

241) Dhahabī, iv, 31.; Wafī, i, 7.

242) I. Ḥawqal, 26.; I. al-Faqīh, 25.

243) I. Ma. Tā., ii, 23a.; A. Zur'a, v, 90b.;
Jāmi', i, 116.

Then he said, 'My son, then you did not write it.' "244
Although 'Urwa took a keen interest generally in all his students and encouraged them, he took a special interest in his student az-Zuhrī.²⁴⁵ This was partly due to the fact that az-Zuhrī's father was one of the most prominent figures in the Zubayrid Party, faithful to its leader, 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr, and his deputy, Muṣ'ab b. az-Zubayr:²⁴⁶ but mainly to the marvellous intellectual capability which az-Zuhrī displayed in studying, understanding and memorising ḥadīth and sunna; and to the honour, respect, and admiration he showed towards his teacher, 'Urwa,²⁴⁷ whose special care and consideration for az-Zuhrī may be attributed to the fact that az-Zuhrī mastered the entire traditions of 'Urwa and excelled in them over all other students of 'Urwa, including his son, Hishām, who was known for his vast knowledge and the narrations of the traditions of his father. Because of az-Zuhrī's superiority over all the other students of 'Urwa in mastering his traditions, critics like Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn (d. 233 A.H.) regarded him as

244) Fāṣil, vi, 64b.; Kifāya, 350.; Jāmi', i, 77.;
Sam'ānī, 78.

245) See p. 41.

246) See p. 8 ff.

247) I. 'Asākir, xiv, 496.

the primary source for the traditions of 'Urwa; and they attach superiority to the traditions narrated by him from 'Urwa over the traditions narrated by Hishām from his father, 'Urwa.²⁴⁸ They consider the isnād of az-Zuhrī from 'Urwa from 'Ā'isha to be the soundest of all the asānīd on the basis of which the traditions of 'Ā'isha from the Prophet are narrated.²⁴⁹

3. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib (d. 94 A.H.)

He was a noble and pious man, and a prominent scholar. Az-Zuhrī stated: "I did not meet any of the members of the Prophet's family (ahl al-bayt) who was more virtuous than 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn." He also stated: "I did not see a Qurayshite who was more virtuous than him."²⁵¹ He was more famous for his piety and asceticism than for his knowledge. His contemporaries nicknamed him "the ornament of the pious" (zayn al-ʿābidīn).²⁵²

248) I. Ma, Tā., iii, 40b.

249) Ma'rifa, 55.

250) Mizzī, vii, under the heading "'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn".; Dhahabī, iv, 35.

251) Ibid.

252) Dhahabī, iv, 37.

The most prominent of all his disciples were az-Zuhrī and his son Zayd b. 'Alī (d. 122 A.H.).²⁵³ Az-Zuhrī often visited him and sat in his company, mostly in order to learn from him. Az-Zuhrī reported: "I had most of my sittings in the company of 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn."²⁵⁴ Once, a sad thing happened in the life of az-Zuhrī which left a strong impression on him, causing him sadness, grief and despair. No one was able to free him from his sad memories except his teacher, 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn.²⁵⁵ Whenever az-Zuhrī mentioned him afterwards, he would say: "'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn was the greatest of all men in showing kindness to me."²⁵⁶

The most significant of all the traditions which az-Zuhrī received from 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn were those which 'Alī narrated from his father al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī from his father 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib from the Prophet, and those which he narrated from his father al-Ḥusayn from his mother Fāṭima from her father the Prophet.

Two famous traditionists, 'Abd ar-Razzāq b. Hammām (d. 211 A.H.) and Abū-Bakr b. Abī-Shayba (d. 235 A.H.),

253) Tahdh., iii, 419-420.

254) Mizzī, vii, under the heading "'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn".

255) I. Sa'd, V, 158.

256) I. Sa'd, V, 158.; Muntakhab, 2479-2480.

both of whom compiled voluminous books on ḥadīth and sunna entitled al-Muṣannaf, consider that the soundest of all the asānīd is the isnād of az-Zuhrī from 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn from his father al-Ḥusayn from his father 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib from the Prophet.²⁵⁷ The traditionist an-Nasā'ī (d. 303 A.H.), the author of as-Sunan, mentions this isnād among the four asānīd which he considered to be the soundest of all the asānīd.²⁵⁸

4. Abū-Bakr b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith b. Hishām al-Makhzūmī (d. 94 A.H.)

He was the monk of Quraysh (rāhib Quraysh)²⁵⁹ and one of the seven jurists to whom the people of Medina had recourse for the clarification of religious matters²⁶⁰ and on whom they depended for solving their legal problems.

- 257) Mizzī, vii, under the heading "'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn."; Ma'rifa, 53.; Kifāya, 562.; 'Ulūm, 12.
- 258) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".; Bidāya, ix, 342.; Tahdh., ix, 448.
- 259) I. Sa'd, v, 153.; Nawawī, I, ii, 194.; Dhahabī, iv, 73.; Tahdh., xii, 31.; Tadhk., i, 64.
- 260) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 132.; I. Khall., i, 254.; Tadhk., i, 63.; Nawawī, I, ii, 194.; Dhahabī, iv, 72.; Tahdh., xii, 31, 32.; Jaṣṣāṣ, i, 629-630.; Jamhara, I, i, 145.

Abū-Bakr enjoyed a very high position among the Umayyad caliphs; and there existed between him and 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān a very intimate companionship. This friendship was responsible for saving the people of Medina from 'Abd-al-Malik's harsh reaction to their opposition.²⁶¹

Abū-Bakr tried, on several occasions, to reconcile the conflict between 'Abd-al-Malik and Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib. However, he did not succeed in his efforts, because of Sa'īd's determined attitude towards the Umayyads, and his strong rejection of Abū-Bakr's mediation.²⁶² It was probably Abū-Bakr who encouraged az-Zuhrī, his closest student, to go to Damascus and attach himself to the Umayyad rulers.

Az-Zuhrī narrated from his teacher, Abū-Bakr, a collection of important aḥādīth and sunan.²⁶³

261) I. Sa'd, v, 154.; Nasab, 304.; Dhahabī, iv, 73.

262) Dhahabī, iv, 6.

263) See Bukhārī, iii, 109, 483.; iv, 66, 146, 292.; Muslim, i, 35, 146, 176.; ii, 461, 562.; iii, 31.; iv, 307.

5. Ḥumayd b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. 'Awf (d. 95 A.H.)

He belonged to the clan of Banū-Zuhra,²⁶⁴ of which az-Zuhrī was also a member. He was the son of the prominent Companion, 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. 'Awf (d. 32 A.H.).²⁶⁵ He received the aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet from his father, 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān, and, from his mother, Umm-Kulthūm, and from a group of the learned Companions - Umm-Salama, the Prophet's wife, Ibn-'Abbās, Ibn-'Umar, Sa'īd b. Zayd, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Amr and Abū-Hurayra.²⁶⁶

Ḥumayd is considered to be one of the most reliable traditionists of the generation of older Successors.²⁶⁷ Among his prominent pupils were his nephew, Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm, Qatāda b. Di'āma, and az-Zuhrī.²⁶⁸ Of his pupils, az-Zuhrī narrated the largest number of traditions from him. This is clear to anyone who follows the narrations of az-Zuhrī

264) I. Sa'd, V, 114.; Dhahabī, iv, 360.

265) I. Sa'd, V, 114.; Istī'āb, ii, 844-850.

266) Tahdh., iii, 45.; I. Sa'd, V, 115.; Dhahabī, iv, 360.; Jam', i, 88-89.

267) I. Sa'd, V, 115.; Tahdh., iii, 45.; Dhahabī, iv, 360.

268) Tahdh., iii, 45.; Dhahabī, iv, 360.

from him in the well-known books of ḥadīth and sunna.²⁶⁹

6. ‘Ubayd-Allāh b. ‘Abd-Allāh b. ‘Utba b. Mas‘ūd
(d. 98 A.H.)

He was one of the relatives of the well-known Companion ‘Abd-Allāh b. Mas‘ūd (d. 32 A.H.).²⁷⁰ ‘Ubayd-Allāh received the ahādīth and sunan from ‘A’isha, Abū-Hurayra, Ibn-‘Abbās²⁷¹ Abū-Sa‘īd al-Khudrī and other scholars among the Companions. His teacher, Ibn-‘Abbās, honoured him and had a very close relationship with him. Az-Zuhrī said: "Ibn-‘Abbās honoured and respected ‘Ubayd-Allāh."²⁷²

269) See Muwatṭa, 109, 122, 128, 131, 150.; Bukhārī, iii, 163, 249, 340, 490.; iv, 101, 122, 133, 264, 278, 302, 368, 402, 485.; Muslim, i, 197.; iii, 59, 75.; iv, 194, 214, 251-252.; Musnad, xiv, 23, 39, 45, 54, 59, 68, 111, 199.; Muṣa., iii, 142, 143, 426.; iv, 194, 225, 258, 286.; v, 63, 254.; viii, 469.

270) Nawawī, I, i, 312.; Ma‘ārif, 84-85.; I. Khay. Ṭab., ii, 609.

271) I. Sa‘d, V, 185.; Dhahabī, iv, 30.; Jam‘, i, 301-302.; Nawawī, I, i, 312.; I. Khalīl., i, 341.; Tadhk., i, 78.; Tahdh., vii, 23.

272) I. Sa‘d, V, 186.; Aghā., ix, 140.; Nawawī, I, i, 312.; Tahdh., vii, 23.

'Ubayd-Allāh attained very high fame and popularity due to his vast knowledge and scholarship. His student, az-Zuhrī, once remarked: "I met four oceans of knowledge, and 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh was one of them."²⁷³

Az-Zuhrī also said: "I had received much knowledge, but when I met 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh I felt as if I had not received any."²⁷⁴ He also stated: "Whenever I sat with any scholar I felt that I had learned all the knowledge he possessed except with 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh. On each occasion I went to him I found something new to learn."²⁷⁵

His vast knowledge, his power of argument and his eloquence of speech, enabled him to overmatch his colleagues - among the generation of the older Successors - in all debates and discussions. Az-Zuhrī said: "I have never seen anyone who was more powerful in gaining mastery over men, when they met in debate and discussion, than 'Ubayd-Allāh."²⁷⁶

273) A. Zur'a, v, 59a.; I. Sa'd, II, ii, 131.; Aghā., iv, 141.; Dhahabī, iv, 30.; see also Tadhk., i, 79.

274) Aghā., ix, 141.; Dhahabī, iv, 30.

275) Nawawī, I, i, 312.; Tahdh., vii, 23-24.

276) A. Zur'a, v, 59a.

His vast knowledge was not confined only to the religious sciences, but also extended to the field of literature. He distinguished himself from his other scholarly colleagues by being a versatile poet who excelled in the art of love poetry (ghazal) and satire (hijā'). Due to the beauty and elegance of his ghazal, its tenderness of style and sweet charming music, the contemporary singers of Medina would vie with one another in singing his odes.²⁷⁷

One of the most famous of his love poems is the ode entitled Umm-aṣ-Ṣabī, in which he describes his love for a woman of his clan (Hudhayl) and tells her that if she is in doubt about the sincerity of his love towards her she should inquire of his colleagues Ibn-al-Musayyib, 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr, Abū-Bakr b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān, Khārija b. Zayd, Sulaymān b. Yasār and al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad who are witnesses to the sincerity of that love. The ode

277) I. Sa'd, V, 185.; Tadhk., i, 79.; Nawawī, I, i, 312.; I. Khall., i, 341.; Aghā., ix, 144, 145, 146, 149. 'Iqd, vi, 139.; Amālī, ii, 22, 162.

runs as follows:

"I love you with such a passionate love.

If you knew only a part of it

You would respond generously

Without caring about the consequences.

Verily, your love, O! Umm-aṣ-Ṣabī,

has made me suffer.

Abū-Bakr is my witness,

and he is a trustworthy witness.

Al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad knows my deep love for you,

as also 'Urwa and Sa'īd.

Sulaymān knows that I love you

and so does Khārija.

When you ask them about my love for you,

they will tell you that what I say is true.

All I possess is for the love of you."²⁷⁸

When Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib heard this ode, he commented upon it saying: "By God! He is safe in her questioning us. He knows that if she calls us to be witnesses, we

278) Aghā., ix, 148.; 'Umda, i, 25.

will not give false evidence to her."²⁷⁹ When he met
'Ubayd-Allāh, he said to him: "You are a jurist-poet."²⁸⁰

We have not mentioned this ode here for its literary beauty, but because it illustrates one important document in the history of Islāmic jurisprudence during the period of the older Successors. The jurists whom 'Ubayd-Allāh mentions in this ode, with the addition of 'Ubayd-Allāh himself, formed the special group of jurists known as "the seven jurists of Medina." The people of Medina turned to them for decisions in legal matters.²⁸¹ Az-Zuhrī had committed to memory all their learning. Makḥūl (d. 113 A.H.), the jurist of Syria during his time, said: "Az-Zuhrī committed to memory the knowledge of the seven jurists."²⁸² He was the most learned of all his colleagues and contemporary scholars in their juristic opinions.

279) Aghā., ix, 148.

280) 'Iqd, ii, 94.; vi, 135.

281) See I. Sa'd, II, ii, 132.; Dhahabī, iv, 183.;
Ma'rifa, 43.; 'Ulūm, 263.; Jaṣṣāṣ, i, 629-630.;
Nawawī, I, i, 172.; Bayhaqī, i, 232.; iv, 135.;
Mudwwana, iv, 8.; I. Kall., i, 254.

282) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".

'Alī b. al-Madīnī (d. 234 A.H.) stated: "Az-Zuhrī was the most learned of all men in the sayings of the seven jurists."²⁸³ 'Ubayd-Allāh's mention of them indicates very clearly the actual existence of this group during the period of the older Successors, and the fact that they were conscious of themselves as a group. It dispels any doubts or differences of opinion as to their names.²⁸⁴

The most distinguished students of 'Ubayd-Allāh were az-Zuhrī and 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz.²⁸⁵ To him belongs the credit for the religious upbringing and moral training of 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz, and for inculcating in him the strong religious spirit. He exercised a powerful influence on his personality, to the extent of changing his attitudes and, ultimately, his stand and actions against the opponents of the Umayyad family.²⁸⁶ Many amusing things happened between 'Ubayd-Allāh and two of his emerging

283) Tadhk., i, 331.

284) cf. Schacht, 243-244, 351.

285) Dhahabī, iv, 30, 164.; v, 138, 142.; Nawawī, I, i, 312.; Tahdh., vii, 23-24.; Bidāya, ix, 177.; Tadhk., i, 79, 119.

286) Aghā., ix, 151-152.; I. Sa'd, V, 245.; Dhahabī, iv, 164.

students, az-Zuhrī and 'Umar. Whenever 'Ubayd-Allāh felt angry with them for failing to fulfil certain duties, or for any other reason, he would reproach them and express his anger in the form of poetry.²⁸⁷

'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz narrated many aḥādīth and sunan which he received from his teacher, 'Ubayd-Allāh, who died just one year before 'Umar became caliph. 'Umar stated: "What I narrated from 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh is more than what I narrated from all other scholars put together. If he were still living, I would not act except according to his opinion."²⁸⁸ The large number of the narrations of 'Umar from 'Ubayd-Allāh fades into insignificance in comparison with the number of the

287) Aghā., ix, 144, 145, 146.; I. 'Asākir, xiv, 497a.;
Ma'ārif, 85.; I. Ma., ii, 5a.; Muḥabbar, 297.;
Jāh. Hay., i, 14-15.

288) Dhahabī, iv, 30.; see also Tahdh., vii, 24.;
Hilya, ii, 188.

narrations of az-Zuhrī from 'Ubayd-Allāh.²⁸⁹ For this reason, the critics of Tradition consider az-Zuhrī to be the main source for the aḥādīth and sunan which have been narrated from 'Ubayd-Allāh and they regard the isnād of az-Zuhrī from 'Ubayd-Allāh from Ibn-'Abbās as the soundest of all the asānīd based on the aḥādīth and sunan narrated from Ibn-'Abbās.²⁹⁰

289) See Muwatṭa', 92, 150, 242, 246, 263, 279, 341.; Bukhārī, iii, 47, 52, 62, 65, 69, 70, 124, 138, 176, 183, 184, 185, 187, 214, 244, 253, 394, 396.; iv, 17, 18, 19, 33, 37, 47, 52, 56, 57, 65, 80, 81, 98, 103, 104, 111, 141, 175, 218, 260, 275, 304, 307, 308, 313, 326, 340, 351, 362, 382, 400, 415, 417, 420, 421, 422, 433, 441, 442.; Muslim, i, 24, 38, 114, 135, 136, 157, 187, 188, 197.; ii, 508, 560, 684, 687.; iii, 29, 30, 69, 70, 107, 114, 118, 134, 153, 287, 303.; iv, 24, 31, 51, 52, 67, 76, 86, 97, 262, 332.

290) Ba'ith, 23, 24.

7. Khārija b. Zayd b. Thābit (d. 100 A.H.).

He was the son of the Companion, Zayd b. Thābit al-Anṣārī (d. 45 A.H.), one of those men who wrote down the revelation for the Prophet.²⁹¹ Zayd was the most learned of all the Companions in al-farā'id (the law of inheritance).²⁹² Khārija inherited from his father the knowledge of al-farā'id. He memorized the aḥādīth and sunan, which he received from his father and from other scholars among the Companions.²⁹³ He became one of the most distinguished scholars among the older Successors and is numbered among the seven jurists of Medina.²⁹⁴

Khārija was the representative of al-Anṣār in the advisory committee which was formed by 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz when he assumed the post of governor of Medina.²⁹⁵ He functioned as the chief of the dīwān of Medina, and

291) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 115-116.; Istī'āb, 537-540.;
Usd, ii, 221-223.; Iṣāba, i, 561-562.;
Ma'ārif, 88.

292) Ibid.

293) Dhahabī, iii, 362.; Nawawī, I, i, 172.; Tahdh, iii, 74-75.; Fahrasat, i, 263.

294) Bidāya, ix, 187.; Nawawī, I, i, 172.; Dhahabī, iii, 362.; Mashāhīr, 64.; Tahdh., iii, 75.; I. Khall., ii, 4.

295) I. Sa'd, V, 245-246.; Tab., vi, 427-428.;
Akhbār, 326.

was responsible for the distribution of the inheritance among its rightful owners, and for the writing of state registers and documents in which information was collected regarding social contracts and commercial dealings.²⁹⁶

'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān (65-86 A.H.) advised az-Zuhrī to attach himself to Khārija, to join his company and to seek knowledge from him.²⁹⁷ Az-Zuhrī went to Khārija and found with him the vast treasure of knowledge of which 'Abd-al-Malik had told him.²⁹⁸

8. Abū-Salama b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. 'Awf (d. 104 A.H.)

Abū-Salama belonged to the clan of az-Zuhrī, Banū-Zuhra.²⁹⁹ His father was the well-known Companion, 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. 'Awf.³⁰⁰ He received the aḥādīth and sunan from the scholars and traditionists among the Companions such as Ibn-'Abbās, 'Ā'isha and Abū-Hurayra.³⁰¹

296) Dhahabī, iii, 362.; Tahdh., iii, 75.

297) Dhahabī, v, 139-141.

298) Ibid.

299) I. Sa'd, V, 115.; Tahdh., xii, 115.

300) I. Sa'd, III, i, 87-97.; Istī'āb, ii, 844 ff.;
Usd, iii, 313 ff.; Iṣāba, ii, 416-417.

301) I. Sa'd, V, 116.; Dhahabī, iv, 76-77.; Nawawī, I,
ii, 241.; Tadhk., i, 63.; Tahdh., xii, 115.

While seeking knowledge, he paid much attention to writing down the aḥādīth and sunan and took a keen interest in memorising them.³⁰² He made a strenuous effort to excel his colleagues in studies. Abū-Salama reported: "I said to 'Ā'isha, 'Verily, 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr has surpassed us by coming to you whenever he wished, and by asking from you whatever he wanted, and thus he has benefitted from your knowledge more than we.' Then she said, 'As for you, if you wish you may sit behind the screen (al-ḥijāb) and ask what you wish. Verily, we, the wives of the Prophet, did not find anybody, after the Prophet, who looked after us more than your father.....'" ³⁰³

The intellectual gifts of Abū-Salama manifested themselves in his youth, so that he became proud. At times, he felt that he knew more than his teachers. He would argue with them and criticize their opinions. This roused the anger of his teachers against him. Az-Zuhrī reported: "Abū-Salama argued against Ibn-'Abbās and differed from his opinions. Ibn-'Abbās would become upset with him, and rebuke him."³⁰⁴ Once his teacher

302) I. Ma. Tā., x, 145a.; I. Hanb. 'Ilal, 1, 247.

303) I. Sa'd, VIII, 152-153.

304) I. Sa'd, V, 186.; Tahdh., xii, 116.

‘Ā’isha said to him: "Verily, Abū-Salama, you are like a small cock which, when he hears the crowing of the big cocks, tries to crow like them."³⁰⁵

His pride in himself and in his knowledge led him into embarrassing situations. ‘Amr b. Dīnār reported: "Once, when Abū-Salama was arguing with Ibn-‘Abbās, he said, 'I am more learned than everyone who urinates.' Ibn-‘Abbās said to him, 'Yes, in byres.' "³⁰⁶ Ash-Sha‘bī stated: "I walked with Abū-Salama, who was between me and Abū-z-Zinād, and he said, 'Between you is the scholar of the people of Medina.' Then a woman asked him about a religious problem and he misinformed her."³⁰⁷

What we have said of the pride and self-conceit of Abū-Salama must not lead the reader to the conclusion that we wish to degrade his position and status, or that we are casting doubt on his standard of learning and scholarship. He was acknowledged by his disciples and by his contemporaries as a man of vast learning, erudition and scholarship. Az-Zuhrī stated: "Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd-Allāh b. Qārīz said to me, when I was in Egypt, 'I know two

305) Dhahabī, iv, 77.

306) Dhahabī, iv, 77.

307) Jāh. Bay., ii, 193.

men of your tribe (qawmika). I do not know anyone who possesses as large a number of traditions as they do. They are 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr and Abū-Salama.' ³⁰⁸ Again, az-Zuhrī stated: "There are four men among the Quraysh whom I found to be oceans of knowledge. They are Ibn-al-Musayyib, 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr, 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh and Abū-Salama b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān." ³⁰⁹ Abū-Salama's appointment to the post of qāḍī of Medina ³¹⁰ was one of the factors which indicated his honoured place in the field of learning, and his vast knowledge. It was a very important position, especially during this period, in which the city of Medina was crowded with distinguished scholars from the Companions and the older Successors.

Az-Zuhrī narrated from Abū-Salama many aḥādīth and

308) Tahdh., xii, 116-117.; see also I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 204, 408.

309) Dhahabī, iv, 77.; Tadhk., i, 63.; Ṣifa, ii, 57.; Tahdh., xii, 116.; cf. Ḥilya, ii, 188.

310) I. Sa'd, V, 115.; Ṭab., v, 232.

sunan,³¹¹ indicating the extent to which he had benefitted from his teacher Abū-Salama.

9. Sālim b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb
(d. 106 A.H.)

He was the grandson of the caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, and the son of the well-known Companion, 'Abd-Allāh b.

'Umar.³¹² His father 'Abd-Allāh loved him more than all

311) See Bukhārī, iii, 29, 30, 102, 109, 141, 173, 190, 210, 264, 271, 274, 304, 308, 311, 322, 366, 402, 413, 418, 460, 464, 465, 490.; iv, 28, 29, 52, 57, 66, 69, 70, 79, 96, 114, 117, 144, 149, 155, 159, 162, 171, 186, 190, 225, 234, 255, 284, 301, 302, 311, 325, 331, 351, 371, 384, 392, 401, 408, 425, 448, 455, 474, 491.; Muslim, i, 31, 33, 34, 66, 72, 88, 90, 111, 119, 132, 146, 153, 161, 175, 192, 195, 226, 233, 258.; ii, 362, 377, 437, 458, 484, 578, 585, 661, 674, 683, 697.; iii, 12, 31, 34, 56, 61, 101, 102, 107, 200, 277, 301, 329.; iv, 24, 29, 33, 39, 41, 47, 50, 57, 71, 84, 88, 89, 92, 93, 100, 123, 144, 149, 216, 307.

312) I. Sa'd, IV, i, 105.; Iṣāba, ii, 347.; Tadhk., i, 39.; Nawawī, I, i, 278-279.; Dhahabī, iii, 177.

his other sons and gave excessive preference to him over the others, so that people blamed him for it. He would respond to their reproaches in the lines of the poet:

"They blame me for my love for Sālim,
and I blame them.

The skin between my eyes and nose is Sālim."³¹³

Because of his father's interest and care, Sālim flourished and grew up in a deeply religious atmosphere. He became one of the greatest scholars of Medina, and one of the most distinguished ascetics of his time.³¹⁴ He travelled on the path that had been trodden by his father in the service of the religious sciences.

Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib said: "Of all his sons, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar had the closest similarity and resemblance to 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb in religion and knowledge; and Sālim b. 'Abd-Allāh had the closest similarity and

313) I. Sa'd, V, 145.; Dhahabī, iv, 115.; Tadhk., i, 88-89.; Ṣifa, ii, 50.

314) Dhahabī, iv, 115.; Nawawī, I, i, 207.; Tadhk., i, 89.; Tahdh., iii, 437-438.; Ṣifa, ii, 51.; Ḥilya, ii, 193-194.

resemblance to 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, of all his sons, in religion and knowledge."³¹⁵

On account of what he knew and had heard about the purity of the character of Sālim and his vast knowledge, and because of the high status he occupied among the prominent scholars of Medina, 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz appointed him to be a member of the advisory committee which he had formed from the distinguished scholars of Medina to assist him in the management of the affairs of the city when he was governor.³¹⁶ When 'Umar became the caliph he used to correspond with Sālim, seeking advice and guidance.³¹⁷ When he invited him to visit him in Damascus, Sālim responded to this kind invitation and stayed with him for a long time.³¹⁸

Sālim greatly influenced az-Zuhrī's intellectual life. Az-Zuhrī was in his company for several years and

315) I. Sa'd, V, 145.; Dhahabī, iv, 115.; Nawawī, I, i, 207.; Tahdh., iii, 437.

316) I. Sa'd, V, 245, 246.; Ṭab., vi, 427-428.

317) I. Sa'd, V, 292.; I. Khall., ii, 94.;
Hilya, ii, 194.

318) A. Zur'a, v, 64b.; x, 147a.

received from him a huge collection of ahādīth and sunan, 319

- 319) See Muwaṭṭa', 35, 47, 57, 122, 150, 162, 165, 338.;
Bukhārī, iii, 66, 68, 84, 96, 101, 155, 183, 197,
217, 239, 357, 402, 425, 431, 454.; iv, 27, 65, 69,
73, 77, 98, 129, 140, 183, 256, 338, 350, 359, 374,
382, 397, 472, 491, 493.; Muslim, i, 61, 145, 166,
236, 267, 270, 271, 314, 325, 341.; ii, 373, 379,
403, 423, 492, 499, 502, 504, 505, 513, 541, 558,
559, 570, 587, 588, 589.; iii, 8, 12, 16, 58, 64,
74, 88, 132, 192, 196, 262, 285, 314.; iv, 10, 29,
32, 35, 36, 140, 165, 170, 246, 301, 317, 326, 327,
352.;
Musnad, vi, 219, 238-239, 240, 241, 244-245, 246,
247, 248, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 270, 277, 288,
289, 290, 308-309.; vii, 25, 36-37, 61, 63, 64, 65,
66, 67, 73-74, 75, 79, 91, 92, 99, 113, 130, 165, 166,
182, 190, 192, 195, 212, 237, 287, 290-291, 305.;
viii, 23, 24, 25, 26, 46, 77, 80, 169-170, 220-221,
254, 255, 257, 258-259, 260, 261, 262, 265-266, 267,
269, 287, 289.; ix, 6-7, 11, 12, 13-14, 17, 34, 35,
45, 49, 114, 115, 116, 117, 139-140, 143, 144, 148-
149, 155, 156-157, 162, 163, 164, 165, 172-176, 177,
178-179, 180, 181, 183, 186, 187, 189, 190, 191-
192, 196, 199, 201-202, 227, 228.

which forms a very important part of the aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet. He also received from him the legal decisions (fatāwā) of his father 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar and his grandfather 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.³²⁰ He depended to a great extent on his juristic views in solving the legal problems that came before him.³²¹ The contemporary scholars of az-Zuhrī regarded him as the first and the final source for the knowledge of the traditions which were narrated by Sālim, and advised the students of ḥadīth and sunna who were eager to learn about them to go to az-Zuhrī.³²²

320) Muṣa, i, 12, 115, 132, 174, 197, 211, 270, 372, 492, 543, 548.; ii, 30, 64, 139, 209, 306, 314, 336, 340, 369, 476-477, 514, 523, 525, 533-534, 540.; iii, 29-30, 78, 79, 195, 207, 219, 268, 327, 523.; iv, 70, 120, 211, 241, 275, 292, 425, 432, 530.; v, 44.; vi, 99, 357, 395.; vii, 26, 38, 66-67, 132, 146-147, 237-238, 292, 395, 421, 456, 462, 502.; viii, 30, 116, 428, 503.

321) Bukh. Ṣa., 108.

322) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 135.

The traditions which were narrated by az-Zuhrī from Sālim from his father 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar from the Prophet, and also those which were narrated by him from Sālim from his father 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar from his father 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb from the Prophet, were especially valued by the leaders of the traditionists both because of the importance of their subjects and because they contained many important laws. Al-Ḥākim an-Nīsābūrī regarded the isnād of az-Zuhrī from Sālim from his father 'Abd-Allāh from his father 'Umar from the Prophet as the soundest isnād on the basis of which the aḥādīth and sunan narrated by 'Umar from the Prophet are reported.³²³ Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Ishāq b. Rahawyah and Abū-Zur'a ad-Dimashqī, considered the isnād of az-Zuhrī from Sālim from his father 'Abd-Allāh from the Prophet as the soundest of all the asānīd.³²⁴ There appears to be no other isnād about which three of the leading scholars of Tradition have agreed to be the soundest of all the asānīd.

323) Ma'rifa, 55.; Tadrīb, 36.

324) Kifāya, 563.; Ma'rifa, 54.; Tadhk., i, 89.;
Dhahabī, iv, 116.; Bā'ith, 22.; Tadrīb, 31-32.;
Tahdh., iii, 437.

10) Al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Abī-Bakr (d. 108 A.H.)

He was the grandson of the caliph Abū-Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq (d. 11-13 A.H.). Of all the members of his family, he was the one who most resembled him in physical appearance and in character.³²⁵ His father was Muḥammad b. Abī-Bakr (d. 38 A.H.), one of the leaders of the rebellion against the caliph 'Uthmān b. 'Affān (d. 23-35 A.H.) and one of the closest assistants of 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib. Muḥammad participated with 'Alī in all his battles, including the Battle of the Camel (36 A.H.) which took place between 'Alī and Muḥammad's sister 'Ā'isha, the Prophet's wife, and his relations the Zubayrids. 'Alī appointed him to the governorship of Egypt in the year 38 A.H.; but his governorship was short-lived, because the Umayyads conquered Egypt in that year, and killed him and burned his body.³²⁶

When his father was killed al-Qāsim was still a child, and his aunt 'Ā'isha took him and brought him up with deep

325) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 139.; Tahdh., vii, 334.

326) I. Khay. Ṭab., i, 218.; Ṭab., iv, 357 ff.

love and affection. He received his education and training under her care.³²⁷ When he was old enough, he began to attend frequently the circles of the scholars and traditionists among the Companions, like Ibn-'Abbās, Abū-Hurayra and Ibn-'Umar.³²⁸ He was very deeply influenced by Ibn-'Umar and followed his method in the narrations of aḥādīth and sunan, in his conduct and characters, and in his neutral attitude towards the political parties. He felt that his father had committed a great sin by taking part in the rebellion against 'Uthmān and because of that sought forgiveness for him in his prayers, and solicited God's mercy for him.³²⁹

The intensive care of his aunt 'Ā'isha, his hard work and his frequent visits to the circles of scholars and traditionists in search of knowledge, combined to make him one of the leading scholars in Medina.³³⁰ He

327) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 126.; Nubalā', I, v, 19a.; Nawawī, I, ii, 55.; Tadhk., i, 97.; Bidāya, ix, 250.; Dhahabī, iv, 182.; Tahdh., vii, 334.

328) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 126.; Nawawī, I, ii, 55.; Nubalā', I, v, 19a.

329) Ashrāf, v, 93.; I. Khall., i, 529.

330) Ḥilya, ii, 182.; Tadhk., i, 97.; Bidāya, ix, 250.; Dhahabī, iv, 182-183.; Nawawī, I, ii, 55.; Ṣifa, ii, 49.; Tahdh., vii, 334-335.

attained great fame for his vast knowledge of sunna and fiqh.³³¹ Abū-z-Zinād said: "I have never seen anyone who is more learned than al-Qāsim in sunna, nor a jurist who is more scholarly than al-Qāsim."³³² Besides his fame in scholarly fields, he was as well-known for his piety and asceticism as his teacher Ibn-ʿUmar. Because of his noble descent, his knowledge, piety and neutral political stand, ʿUmar b. ʿAbd-al-ʿAzīz considered him to be the most deserving of all men for the caliphate. Once, ʿUmar said: "If I had the power and authority to appoint a caliph, I would appoint al-Qāsim."³³³

The intellectual fame of al-Qāsim and his wide knowledge attracted the attention of the Medinan students and others. They assembled around him in the Prophet's mosque in order to learn from him. He had two circles, one in the morning and the other in the evening.³³⁴ The

331) Ibid.

332) Tadhk., i, 97.; Dhahabī, iv, 182-183.; see also Ṣifa, ii, 49.; Ḥilya, ii, 183-184.; Tahdh., vii, 334.

333) I. Saʿd, V, 253-254.; Dhahabī, iv, 183.; Tadhk., i, 97.; Ṣifa, ii, 49.

334) I. Saʿd, V, 140, 141.; see also Dhahabī, iv, 184.

most illustrious of his students in the field of ḥadīth and sunna were his son 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. al-Qāsim, Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Anṣārī, Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm, Ibn-'Awn, Abū-Bakr b. Muḥammad b. 'Amr b. Ḥazm, 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Umar al-'Umarī and az-Zuhrī.³³⁵ The last two are considered to be the most scholarly in the knowledge of aḥādīth of al-Qāsim. The isnād of each of them from al-Qāsim from his aunt 'Ā'isha from the Prophet is considered to be "The isnād which is plaited with gold (mushabbak bi-dh-dhahab)",³³⁶ a term which is used by the ḥadīth critics to indicate its superlative quality.

335) Tadhk., i, 96-97.; Dhahabī, iv, 182.; Nawawī, I, ii, 55.; Tahdh., vii, 333-334.

336) See Dhahabī, iv, 183.; Tahdh., vii, 334.

(c) The group of the older 'Arab Successors - not related to the Companions

This group constitutes the rijāl of az-Zuhrī from the generation of older Successors who were of 'Arab origin but who were not the sons, grandsons, or relatives of the Companions. The most famous of them are classified below according to the chronological order of their dates of death.

1. Abū-Idrīs b. 'Abd-Allāh al-Khawlānī (d. 80 A.H.)

He was a traditionist of Syria, and its jurist, judge, and the preacher of its people. Sa'īd b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz said: "Abū-Idrīs was the scholar of Syria after Abū-d-Dardā'."³³⁷ Makḥūl said: "I have never seen one who is more learned than Abū-Idrīs."³³⁸ Az-Zuhrī stated: "Abū-Idrīs was the preacher of the people of Syria and their judge during the caliphate of 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān."³³⁹

Abū-Idrīs narrated the aḥādīth and sunan from 'Abd-Allāh b. Mas'ūd, 'Ubāda b. aṣ-Ṣāmit, Hudhayfa b. al-Yamān, Abū-Dhar al-Ghifārī, al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba,

337) Dhahabī, iii, 216.; Tadhk., i, 57.; Tahdh., v, 85.

338) Istī'āb, iv, 1594.; see also Tadhk., i, 57.

339) A. Zur'a, i, 12b.; see also Dhahabī, iii, 216.; Tadhk., i, 57.

Abū-d-Dardā' and others among the older Companions.³⁴⁰
 Az-Zuhrī met him and received from him a small collection
 of aḥādīth and sunan which he narrated on his authority.³⁴¹

2. 'Alqama b. Waqqāṣ al-Laythī (d. 81 or 86 A.H.)

He was one of the traditionists of Medina, and was
 a noble, trustworthy person.³⁴² He narrated a small
 collection of aḥādīth and sunan from 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb,
 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, 'Ā'isha and Ibn-'Abbās.³⁴³ The
 most famous of the few students who narrated from him
 was az-Zuhrī.³⁴⁴

3. 'Aṭā' b. Yazīd al-Laythī (d. 105 or 107 A.H.)

'Aṭā' grew up in Medina, where he was born in the
 year 25 A.H.³⁴⁵ He received the aḥādīth and sunan

340) Tahdh., v, 85.; Tadhk., i, 56.; Dhahabī, iii, 215.

341) I. Sa'd, VII, ii, 157-158.; Istī'āb, iv, 1595.;
Tadhk., i, 56.; Tahdh., v, 85.; Muṣa., iv, 272,
 519.; vi, 4.; Bukhārī, iii, 64.; Musnad, xii,
 208-209.

342) Mashāhīr, 67.; Tadhk., i, 53.; Dhahabī, iii, 193.

343) I. Sa'd, V, 43.

344) Tadhk., i, 53.; Tahdh., vii, 280.

345) Mashāhīr, 113.

from a group of traditionists, and from the narrators of traditions of the generation of the Companions. Among them were Abū-Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, Abū-Sa'īd al-Khudrī, Abū-Hurayra, Tamīm ad-Dārī and 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Adī b. al-Khiyār.³⁴⁶ He became one of the well-known and reliable traditionists of Medina. When he moved to Palestine, he settled in the city of ar-Ramla, where he spread the ḥadīth and sunna until his death.³⁴⁷ It appears that there were no scholars in Palestine during his period who were more prominent than 'Aṭā' in the field of ḥadīth and sunna. Az-Zuhrī narrated from him many aḥādīth and sunan³⁴⁸ - an indication of his importance as a traditionist, and of the richness of his knowledge. He was the richest of az-Zuhrī's rijāl in this group. Az-Zuhrī narrated more from him than from all the others.

346) I. Sa'd, V, 104-105.; Dhahabī, iv, 154.;
Tahdh., vii, 217.

347) Dhahabī, iv, 154.; Tahdh., vii, 217.

348) Bukhārī, iii, 69.; iv, 152, 168, 181, 224, 246,
252, 314, 461.; Muṣa., iv, 303.; vii, 146.;
viii, 226-227.; Muslim, i, 43, 77, 97, 143.;
ii, 428.; iii, 214, 223, 224.; iv, 148, 177.

(d) The group of the older Mawālī Successors

This group consists of the rijāl of az-Zuhrī from the generation of the older Successors among the mawālī (the non-‘Arabs), some of whom are considered to be the most famous mawālī of the Companions and among the most distinguished scholars from the older Successors. Their names are given below, classified according to the chronological order of their dates of death.

1. Sa‘d b. ‘Ubayd (d. 98 A.H.)

He was a Medinan Qur’ān reader, traditionist and jurist. He was the mawlā of two of the Companions, namely ‘Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. ‘Awf and ‘Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Azhar.³⁴⁹ He narrated the aḥādīth and sunan from ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān, ‘Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib and Abū-Hurayra.³⁵⁰

Az-Zuhrī narrated from him many aḥādīth and sunan. In his narrations from him, az-Zuhrī does not mention Sa‘d’s name; but he mentions his Kunya Abū-‘Ubayd out of respect for him. He praised him in the following

349) I. Sa‘d, V, 62.

350) I. Sa‘d, V, 62.; Dhahabī, iv, 82.;

Tahdh., iii, 477.

words: 'Abū-'Ubayd was one of the readers (one of the scholars who were considered to be knowledgeable in the readings of the Qur'ān) and one of the jurists (one of the scholars who were noted for their vast knowledge of jurisprudence), and of the first class of the older Successors."³⁵¹

The traditionists who came after az-Zuhrī agreed on the reliability of Abū-'Ubayd. Ibn-Sa'd wrote: "Abū-'Ubayd was a reliable narrator."³⁵² Ibn-Ḥibbān wrote: "Abū-'Ubayd was one of the reliable Medinan traditionists."³⁵³ Aṭ-Ṭabarī said: "As for Abū-'Ubayd, there is unanimous agreement about his reliability."³⁵⁴

Az-Zuhrī narrated a small collection of aḥādīth and sunan which he had received from Abū-'Ubayd.³⁵⁵

351) I. Sa'd, V, 62.; Tahdh., iii, 477.

352) I. Sa'd, V, 62.

353) Mashāhīr, 76.

354) Tahdh., iii, 478.

355) Bukhārī, iv, 26, 48, 194.;
Muslim, iii, 261.; iv, 244.

2. Ṭā'ūs b. Kaysān (d. 106 A.H.)

He was born in Yemen,³⁵⁶ and studied in Mecca and Medina. He received the aḥādīth and sunan from the four 'Abādila (al-'abādila al-arba'a) - 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ and 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr—from Zayd b. Thābit, 'Ā'isha, Abū-Hurayra, and from many other traditionists and scholars among the Companions.³⁵⁷ Ṭā'ūs said: "I met fifty Companions of the Prophet."³⁵⁸ After finishing his studies, he returned to Yemen and stayed there spreading ḥadīth and sunna, and became its leading scholar and the source of religious sciences for its people.³⁵⁹ In spite of his living in Yemen, almost every year he would visit Mecca to perform al-Ḥajj.³⁶⁰ He made use of this opportunity to hold sessions in al-Masjid al-Ḥarām for the students of Mecca and others who came to Mecca from various parts of the Islāmic world. When he narrated aḥādīth, he spoke very slowly,

356) I. Sa'd, V, 392.; Dhahabī, iv, 126.

357) Ja'dī, 56.; Tadhk., i, 90.; Ṣifa, ii, 163.;
Tahdh., v, 9.; Nawawī, I, i, 251.

358) Ṣifa, ii, 164.; Dhahabī, iv, 128.

359) Tadhk., i, 90.

360) Ṣifa, ii, 164.; Tahdh., v, 9.

as though he were counting the words so that his students might not miss any of them.³⁶¹ His teacher, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās, praised him for his vast knowledge and piety.³⁶² His student, az-Zuhrī, likewise showered praise on him and testified to his reliability. He said: "If you saw Ṭā'ūs, you would know that he would not lie."³⁶³

Az-Zuhrī narrated a small group of aḥādīth and sunan which he had received from Ṭā'ūs.³⁶⁴

3. Sulaymān b. Yasār (d. 107 A.H.)

He was the mawlā of Maymūna bint-al-Ḥārith, the wife of the Prophet,³⁶⁵ and one of the seven jurists.³⁶⁶ He was the most distinguished scholar among the Medinan mawālī of his period.³⁶⁷

He narrated the aḥādīth and sunan from a large group

361) I. Sa'd, V, 393, 394.; Tahdh., v, 9.

362) Dhahabī, iv, 126.; Tadhk., i, 90.

363) Tahdh., v, 10.

364) Ja'dī, 56.; Tadhk., i, 90.; Tahdh., v, 9.;
Bidāya, ix, 235, 237-238.; Ṣifa, ii, 163.

365) I. Sa'd, V, 130.; Ma'ārif, 158.; Mashāhīr, 64.

366) See p. 275.

367) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 132.; Dhahabī, iv, 121.;
Tadhk., i, 91.

of scholars and traditionists among the Companions: for example, Zayd b. Thābit, Ibn-'Umar, Ibn-'Abbās, Abū-Hurayra, Jābir b. 'Abd-Allāh and Abū-Sa'īd al-Khudrī. He narrated also from the wives of the Prophet, Umm-Salama, 'Ā'isha and Maymūna.³⁶⁸ He distinguished himself from all his colleagues among the scholars of Medina by his wide knowledge of the rules of divorce (aḥkām aṭ-ṭalāq), and by his ability to solve the problems related to this subject. Qatāda b. Di'āma reported: "I came to Medina, and asked who was the most learned of its scholars in 369 matters of divorce. They answered: 'Sulaymān b. Yasār' " Contemporary scholars acknowledged his superiority in this field, and regarded him as their source for the rules of divorce. They would advise those who came to them with queries about the rules of divorce to go to Sulaymān. It is narrated from 'Abd-Allāh b. Yazīd that he said: "I saw one who questions - about the laws of divorce - coming to Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib and questioning him. Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib said to him, 'Go to Sulaymān b. Yasār, for verily he is more learned in those matters than all those who remain today.' "³⁷⁰ Sulaymān b. Yasār is

368) I. Sa'd, V, 130.; Jam', i, 177.; Tahdh., iv, 228.

369) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 132.

370) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 132.; Dhahabī, iv, 121.

regarded as one of az-Zuhrī's teachers who played an important role in his educational and cultural upbringing and in the shaping of his ideas and the refinement of his thoughts. The credit for all the vast knowledge which az-Zuhrī attained in respect of the rules and laws of divorce, and for the accomplishment and skill which he gained in understanding its intricate problems and their difficult solutions,³⁷¹ belongs to him. Az-Zuhrī narrated from Sulaymān many aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet and many others of the Companions. He also narrated a collection of his juristic decisions.³⁷²

4. 'Aṭā' b. Abī-Rabāḥ (d. 114 or 115 A.H.)

'Aṭā' was born in the city of al-Janad in Yemen in the year 27 A.H.³⁷³ His family moved to Mecca, where he

371) Muṣa., vi, 300, 304, 305, 306, 311, 319, 321, 325, 328, 337, 339, 343, 345, 359, 364, 365, 372, 376, 377, 384, 401, 406, 414, 421, 423, 425, 426, 427-428, 433, 434, 439, 440, 442, 443, 460, 464, 466, 467, 470, 478, 488, 492, 501, 517, 524.

372) Muwaṭṭa', 118, 163, 182-183, 190, 228, 234.;
Muslim, ii, 592-593.; iii, 93, 329.;
Bukhārī, iii, 172.; iv, 172.; iv, 96, 166.;
Muṣa., vi, 211, 238.

373) Mashāḥīr, 81.; I. Sa'd, V, 344.; Ja'dī, 59.

grew up and studied in the circles of its scholars in al-Masjid al-Ḥarām.³⁷⁴ He received the ḥadīth and sunna from 'Ā'isha, Umm-Salama, Usāma b. Zayd, Ibn-'Umar, Jābir b. 'Abd-Allāh, Ibn-'Abbās, Abū-Hurayra, Abū-Sa'īd al-Khudrī and other scholars, traditionists and narrators of the traditions among the generation of the Companions.³⁷⁵ After the completion of his studies in al-Masjid al-Ḥarām, he worked as a teacher in one of the Katātīb of Mecca for some years.³⁷⁶ He became a teacher in al-Masjid al-Ḥarām during the lifetime of his teacher Ibn-'Abbās. He attained great fame for his vast knowledge of ḥadīth and fiqh.³⁷⁷

Ibn-'Abbās aroused 'Aṭā''s enthusiasm and represented him as his successor in teaching these sciences after his death. He directed the attention of the people of Mecca to him by saying to them, whenever they assembled around him to learn from him or to

374) Mashāhīr, 81.; I. Sa'd, V, 344.; Ja'dī, 59.

375) Dhahabī, iv, 278.; Tahdh., vii, 199.;
Hilya, iii, 315-316.; Bidāya, ix, 306.

376) Dhahabī, iv, 278.; Tahdh., vii, 200.;
Nawawī, I, i, 333.

377) I. Sa'd, V, 344.; Ṣifa, ii, 119.; Tadhk., i, 98.;
Nawawī, I, i, 333-334.

question him: "People of Mecca, you are gathering around me, while in your midst there is 'Aṭā'." ³⁷⁸ Thus, after the death of Ibn-'Abbās, 'Aṭā' headed the scholars of Mecca, as stated by az-Zuhri, ³⁷⁹ and became their source for the knowledge of ḥadīth and fiqh. ³⁸⁰ He was regarded as the most scholarly jurist among the older Successors in respect of the manāsik (laws of Ḥajj). Abū-Ja'far al-Bāqir said: "None remains today who is more learned than 'Aṭā' b. Rabāḥ in respect of the manāsik of Ḥajj." ³⁸¹ Qatāda stated: "The most learned of all men in respect of the manāsik is 'Aṭā'." ³⁸² Due to his superiority over the other scholars of his time in relation to the manāsik of Ḥajj, the Umayyad rulers ordered criers to call the pilgrims in Mecca during the season of pilgrimage as follows: "None shall

378) Dhahabī, iv, 279.; Tadhk., i, 98.; Tahdh., vii, 200-201.; Bidāya, ix, 306.

379) 'Ulūm, 360-362.; see also Ḥilya, iii, 311.; see also Bidāya, ix, 308.

380) I. Sa'd, V, 346.; Dhahabī, iv, 279.; Ṣifa, ii, 119.

381) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 134.; V, 344.; Ḥilya, iii, 311.; Nawawī, I, i, 334.; Bidāya, ix, 306.

382) I. Sa'd, V, 345.

indulge in advising the people in relation to the manāsik of Ḥajj except 'Aṭā' b. Rabāḥ."³⁸³

Az-Zuhrī respected 'Aṭā', honoured his knowledge, and regarded him as the master of the scholars of Mecca, just as he considered Ibn-al-Musayyib as the master of the scholars of Medina. He narrated from him a collection of aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet.³⁸⁴

5. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Hurmuz al-A'raj (d. 117 A.H.)

He was the Qur'ān reader of Medina during his time and one of its famous scholars in ḥadīth, grammar and genealogy.³⁸⁵ He engaged in the work of copying the maṣāḥif for the people of Medina.³⁸⁶ He narrated aḥādīth and sunan from many Companions; among whom were Muḥammad b. Maslama, Abū-Hurayra, Abū-Sa'īd al-Khudrī, Ibn-'Abbās and 'Abd-Allāh b. Mālik.³⁸⁷ He employed the method of

383) Nawawī, I, i, 334.; Bidāya, ix, 306.

384) Bidāya, ix, 306.; Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".

385) Ghāya, i, 381.

386) Fihrist, 39.; Nuzha, 6, 8.

387) Dhahabī, iv, 275.; Tadhk., i, 97.

388) Nawawī, I, i, 306.; Dhahabī, iv, 275.; Tadhk., i, 97.; Tahdh., vi, 290.

reading in transmitting his aḥādīth to his students.³⁸⁹

He is regarded as the most important teacher of az-Zuhrī from the generation of older Successors in the field of Qur'ānic readings and he was one of those teachers from whom az-Zuhrī received many aḥādīth and sunan.³⁹⁰

Az-Zuhrī used to visit him with his colleagues in the office (dukkān) where he was engaged in the task of copying the maṣāḥif, and would sometimes borrow papyrus from him in order to write down the long traditions which he heard from him during his visits.³⁹¹

(e) The group of the older women Successors

This group consists of the women among the older Successors whom az-Zuhrī had met, and from whom he received directly the aḥādīth and sunan which he narrated on their authority. The most famous of them are:

389) I. Sa'd, V, 209.

390) Muslim, i, 213.; ii, 644-645.; iii, 52.; iv, 92, 148.; Musnad, xii, 268-269, 270, 272.; xiii, 3.; xiv, 20, 47, 119, 122.; Bukhārī, iii, 438.; iv, 234, 439.

391) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".

1. 'Amra bint - 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Anṣāriyya
(d. 103 or 104 A.H.)

She was the lady of the women Successors sayyidat-nisā' at-tābi'in.³⁹² Her father 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Sa'd died when she was a child. 'Ā'isha, the Prophet's wife, felt sympathy for her and her sisters, took them into her home, and was responsible for their upbringing and education.³⁹³ Among her sisters, it was she who rose to prominence and memorised the aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet which were narrated by 'Ā'isha and the other wives of the Prophet.³⁹⁴ She learned the juristic decisions of the Companions and, after the death of 'Ā'isha, was the most learned of all the women of her time. She occupied among the scholars of the Successors a position almost equal to that which her teacher, 'Ā'isha, had occupied among the scholars of the Companions. Some of the indications of the noble position which she occupied among the scholars of the Successors, and of her high intellectual attainment, were the fact that contemporary scholars of Medina consulted her regarding minute legal problems and that 'Urwa b. az-Zubayr and Sulaymān b. Yasār

392) 'Ulūm, 275.

393) I. Sa'd, viii, 353.; Tarājim, 50.

394) I. Sa'd, viii, 353.; Dhahabī, iv, 40.;
Tarājim, 50.

narrated from her some of the traditions.³⁹⁵

Al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad questioned her about some of the difficulties he encountered in understanding some of the aḥādīth of his aunt, 'Ā'isha, his admiration for her method and style of narration of the aḥādīth of 'Ā'isha was a clear indication of her superior position.³⁹⁶

'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz, during his caliphate, regarded her as the most learned, of all those who remained, in the traditions of 'Ā'isha. Muḥammad b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān, the brother of 'Amra, stated: "'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz said to me, 'None remains today who is more learned than 'Amra in the traditions of 'Ā'isha.' "³⁹⁷ Her scholarly colleagues in Medina advised their students to go to her, and to receive knowledge from her. Az-Zuhrī stated: "Al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad said to me, 'If you want to learn the traditions of 'Ā'isha go to 'Amra, for verily she is the most learned of all people in her traditions, as she was under her care.' "³⁹⁸

'Amra is regarded as one of those teachers of

395) I. Ḥanb. 'Ilal, i, 12.; I. Sa'd, V, 287.; Tarājim, 50.; Tahdh., xii, 438.; Muslim, iv, 177.; Muwaṭṭa', 131.

396) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 132.

397) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 132.; Tahdh., xii, 439.

398) Dhahabī, v, 145.; Tadhk., i, 122.

az-Zuhrī who greatly influenced him. She was responsible, to a great extent, for the fame he attained and for his vast knowledge. Az-Zuhrī was attached to her for a long time. He narrated from her many aḥādīth and sunan of the Prophet, and opinions and juristic rulings of the Companions, particularly those of 'Ā'isha.³⁹⁹ He described her as 'an inexhaustible ocean of knowledge.'⁴⁰⁰ He described only five of his teachers in this way, namely: Ibn-al-Musayyib, 'Urwa, Abū-Salama, 'Abayd-Allāh b. 'Abd-Allāh and 'Amra.⁴⁰¹

2. Hind bint-al-Ḥārith al-Firāsiyya

She belongs to the tribe of az-Zuhrī, Quraysh.⁴⁰² She was one of the students and companions of Umm-Salama, the Prophet's wife,⁴⁰³ who is well-known for the active interest she took in narrating his aḥādīth and sunan.⁴⁰⁴ Hind is regarded as one of the most reliable woman traditionists of the generation of the older Successors.⁴⁰⁵

399) Bukhārī, iii, 351.; iv, 296.; Muslim, i, 117, 128.; ii, 581.; iii, 103.; Muṣa., i, 303.; vi, 167.; Musnad, vi, 43.

400) Tadhk., i, 112.

401) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 131.

402) Tahdh., xii, 457.

403) Tahdh., xii, 457. I. Sa'd, viii, 354.

404) I. Sa'd, II, ii, 126.

405) Tahdh., xii, 457.

Az-Zuhrī met her when he was a student at Medina, and received from her the aḥādīth and sunan which she narrated on the authority of Umm-Salama. Whenever he narrated from her any tradition which he had received from her, he indicated in his isnād that he used to sit near her without a screen between them.⁴⁰⁶

(f) The group of al-aqrān (the colleagues)

This group consists of the aqrān (colleagues) of az-Zuhrī, namely the scholars and traditionists of his generation (the younger Successors) from whom he had narrated aḥādīth and sunan. They fall into two categories:

I. The aqrān with whom he exchanged the narrations of aḥādīth and sunan. The most prominent of them were:

1. Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz (99-101 A.H.).⁴⁰⁷
2. 'Amr b. Shu'ayb b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ (d. 118 A.H.).⁴⁰⁸
3. Muḥammad b. Muslim b. Tadrus Abū-az-Zubayr al-Makkī (d. 126 A.H.).⁴⁰⁹

406) Muṣa., xi, 362-363.; Bukhārī, iv, 86, 369.

407) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī"; Dhahabī, iv, 164.; v, 136.; Tahdh., vii, 476.; ix, 447.

408) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī"; Dhahabī, iv, 285.; v, 136.; Tahdh., viii, 48.

409) Tahdh., ix, 440, 447.

4. Muḥammad b. al-Munkadir (d. 131 A.H.).⁴¹⁰
5. 'Abd-Allāh b. Abī-Bakr b. Muḥammad b. 'Amr b. Ḥazm (d. 135 A.H.).⁴¹¹
6. Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Anṣārī (d. 143 A.H.).⁴¹²

II The second category consists of his aqrān from whom he narrated, but who had not narrated from him. The most distinguished among them were:

1. 'Abd-al-Malik b. Abī-Bakr b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith b. Hishām (d. 105 A.H.).⁴¹³
2. Zayd b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib (d. 120 A.H.).⁴¹⁴
3. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā b. Ḥibbān (d. 121 A.H.).⁴¹⁵

- 410) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".; Dhahabī, v, 155.; Tahdh., ix, 447, 473.
- 411) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".; Dhahabī, v, 264.; Tahdh., v, 164.
- 412) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".; Tahdh., ix, 446, 447.
- 413) Mizzī, x, under the rubric "az-Zuhrī".; Dhahabī, iv, 147.; Tahdh., vi, 387.
- 414) Tahdh., iii, 419.
- 415) Tahdh., ix, 508.

CONCLUSION

In the preceding pages an effort has been made to study the life of az-Zuhrī and his scholarship in Qur'ānic sciences and Tradition (ḥadīth and sunna).

We have seen that Muḥammad b. Muslim b. 'Ubayd-Allāh was known by two names: Ibn-Shihāb and az-Zuhrī. He was born in Mecca and received his primary education in one of its Katātīb. His father was one of the supporters of the Zubayrids. Az-Zuhrī moved to Medina with his family at the later stage of his childhood. Beginning with the learning of the sciences of Genealogy and Poetry, he transferred to the religious sciences taught in the Prophet's mosque. He distinguished himself by his strong memory, intelligence, patience and eagerness for seeking knowledge.

After completing his education in Medina, az-Zuhrī travelled to Damascus, the capital of the Umayyad empire, to earn his livelihood and to look for his future. On the first day after his arrival there, he was given the opportunity of meeting the caliph, 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān, who welcomed him and fulfilled his material needs. The close relationship between az-Zuhrī and the Umayyad caliphs, based on mutual respect, developed from that moment. He held several positions under them. Az-Zuhrī exerted a great influence upon the members of the ruling Umayyad family,

which he used to direct them towards the true Islamic spirit and for the service of the people.

Having been a keen student from his early childhood, az-Zuhrī devoted himself to study. He was fortunate in having spent his student days in Medina, which at that time was flooded with distinguished scholars among the generation of the younger Companions and the older Successors. He attained a high level in the academic sphere. He was not only recognized as an important scholar by the people of his time, but was also accepted as an authority by those who came after him. By virtue of his towering personality, az-Zuhrī gave a new direction to the religious sciences and made a special contribution to them. Since the scope of this thesis is limited, an effort has been made to undertake a detailed study of his contribution to Qur'ānic sciences and Tradition only.

Readings (textual studies) and exegesis occupied a very important place in Qur'ānic sciences. Az-Zuhrī is held to be a leading scholar in these two sciences. Many of his views about readings are regarded as fundamental principles of the science of textual readings; and were followed by the readers of the Qur'ān who came after him. He compiled a set of readings that was known by his name and became equally popular among the scholars of readings and exegesis because it was easy to pronounce and under-

stand. He adopted a method in the interpretation of the Qur'ān consisting of five ways: interpretation by the Qur'ān itself; by the Tradition; by the sayings of the Companions; by the sayings of the older Successors and by personal opinion. This method is known as at-Tafsīr bi-l-Ma'thūr, and was followed by the later commentators in the Qur'ānic exegesis. Az-Zuhrī completely avoided the use of al-Isrā'īliyyāt in his interpretation of the Qur'ān. For this reason, his exegesis was free from myths and legends. He compiled two works related to Qur'ānic sciences. In Tanzīl al-Qur'ān, he made a valuable contribution by his arrangement of the Sūras according to the chronology of their revelation at Mecca and Medina. In Mansūkh al-Qur'ān, he explained the abrogating and the abrogated verses. So he opened the door for later compilers in this important branch of Qur'ānic sciences.

Az-Zuhrī regarded Traditions as a revelation from God to his Prophet (Muḥammad) and a trust which the Prophet had bestowed upon his community (umma). That is why he was engaged enthusiastically in teaching and propagating them. He applied various oral and written methods: as-Samā', al-Qirā'a, al-Imlā', al-Munāwala and al-Mukātaba to preserve them from extinction. He helped to increase interest in them. He zealously preserved them from distortion. He warned people about the fabricators and criticised fabricated Traditions. The traditionists and

critics acknowledged his efforts in the teaching and propagation of Traditions and in preserving them from distortion and fabrication. Just as they recognized his asānīd as the soundest, so they regarded his Traditions as the best of all. Az-Zuhrī is acknowledged as the first compiler of Traditions. He compiled sunan for 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz then aḥādīth for Hishām b. 'Abd-al-Malik. His activity in this field led to the spread of the art of compilation among his colleagues and contemporary scholars of Tradition and jurisprudence. It also gave rise to a new stage in the writing down of Traditions - known as Taṣnīf-al-'Ilm. The first to write Traditions on the basis of Taṣnīf were his pupils who were influenced by his activity in compilation.

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